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TAMIL CULTURE

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

J. Filliozat cf. *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 300. First Director of French Institute of Indology at Pondicherry.

T. P. Meenakshisundaran, Vice-Chancellor of Madurai University.

M. Varadarajan, Prof. and Head of the Dept. of Tamil, Madras University.

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Because of the value of the papers that were read at the Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies at Kuala Lumpur (Cf. Report, p. 252) as well as the soaring prices of printing, it was decided by the Editorial Board to publish the combined issue of No. 2 and No. 3 in September. We are glad that some very valuable contributions to the Conference have found place in this issue.

To some subscribers who are not in receipt of certain numbers of *Tamil Culture,* we express regret if it has been caused by any oversight of this office and we shall despatch the same immediately. But if our files show the certificate of posting to their addresses, we kindly request them to buy a fresh copy for their collection and lodge their complaint to their post office.

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The cost of postage obliges us to request our subscribers in Mauritius to add it to their subscriptions.

Managing Editor.

International Conference–Seminar of Tamil Studies

OPENING SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER Y. T. M. TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJ

Tan Sri Chairman, Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, President and Delegates of the Conference, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy indeed to be present here this morning at the inauguration of this International Conference of Tamil Studies. It gives me the opportunity to welcome you all, in person, in my dual capacities — as Chancellor of the University of Malaya, and as Prime Minister of Malaysia. I am glad that you have chosen our University as the venue for this international gathering, for, here in Malaysia, we are always happy to foster international friendships and goodwill. We believe that by mutual co-operation, the nations of the world can advance together towards peace and happiness, harmony and brotherhood.

International Conferences are today an accepted means for the advancement of knowledge and learning. When men from different countries and backgrounds meet together and exchange ideas and views, valuable results can be expected. At this gathering, you will no doubt have many difficult problems to talk about with one another.

Tamil is one of the languages in use in Malaysia. In centuries gone by, flourishing Tamil merchant communities and priestly classes spread out from India to parts of South East Asia, and something of those old associations may be seen through historical records, monuments and traditions. In the ceremonies in the Royal

Houses of certain of our Northern States may be seen some similarities with Indian traditions. Our own language, Malay, contains evidence of the frequent social intercourse between this part of the world, and Tamil-speaking people.

More recently, during the last 100 years, many Tamil-speaking people from India and Ceylon have come and settled in the Malay Peninsula. Their descendants may be seen now in various walks of life — in the Cabinet, in the plantations, in business, and in the professions as Teachers, Lawyers, Doctors, Administrators and Parliamentarians. Today in Malaysia we have people of various racial origins living together in very close harmony. Malays, other natives of Malaysia, Chinese and Indians have joined together in founding this happy Nation, and it is a matter of pride to us that we all think of ourselves first and foremost as Malaysians, with a common allegiance to the King and Country. I have often described myself as the "happiest Prime Minister". I am happy because Malaysia is a happy country. We have learnt to respect and value the different streams of culture that have nourished our land and nurtured our people. These cultures have now been blended to form our Malaysian heritage.

In our educational system, the Tamil language is one of the media of instruction in the Tamil Schools. In the Secondary Schools there is opportunity, for anyone who so desires, to learn Tamil as a subject. And in the University, we have a Department of Indian Studies, together with the Department of Malay Studies and the Department of Chinese Studies. So at the highest possible level, the languages and cultures of our people are encouraged and supported. The Department of Indian Studies is fortunate in having as its Head a person who is not a narrow specialist, but one who commands a knowledge of several languages. I refer to the Professor Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, Dean of the Feculty of Arts. No doubt his leadership has been one of the reasons for your choice of the University of Malaya as the venue for your Conference.

Tamil is one of the languages very much in use, not only in India, but also in other parts of Asia and even Africa. In its literature are many gems of learning and wisdom. The Thirukkural, for example, a Tamil work of the first or second century, has been

translated into various languages, and has been studied and praised all over the world. I am happy that this valuable work is being translated into Malay and Chinese. I understand that the motto of this Conference is taken from a verse nearly twenty centuries old:

"YĀTUM ŪRE, YĀVARUM KĒḶIR"

meaning:

"All the earth is my homeland
And all its people my kinsfolk"

What beautiful words expressing such a sentiment — most appropriate for an international get-together.

At this Conference, I understand that you will be studying critically various aspects of Tamil language, literature, culture and South East Asian culture contacts. I hope that your deliberations will meet with every success; I hope too that all the participants will have a happy and enjoyable time, and that the overseas participants will be seeing something of Malaysian life and hospitality.

I am especially happy to welcome here the Chief Minister of Madras, and to reciprocate the hospitality and friendliness which was lavished on me during my visit to his State.

With the greatest pleasure, I now declare open this First International Seminar of Tamil Studies.

SPEECH DELIVERED BY SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM,

Chief Minister of Madras

Tan Sri Chairman, the Honourable Prime Minister, and Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indeed it gives me very great pleasure to accept your invitation to say a few words on behalf of the delegates and observers who have come over here to participate in this memorable International Conference—Seminar of Tamil Studies. These observers and delegates have gathered here from 25 different countries of the world having been invited by the University of Malaya, the International Association of Tamil Research and the National Education (Indian Schools) Development Council (Malaya). I also note with great pleasure and deep appreciation that delegates from countries like U.S.A., U.K., Japan, Thailand, Germany, France, Holland, Denmark, Burma, Ceylon, Australia, Mauritius, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Swedon, Switzerland, etc., have taken so much pains and evinced so much interest in participating in this Conference and have thus made it truly International. As the leader of the delegation from Tamil Nad, whose language and culture have been permeating throughout the East and West in days of yore, I deem it a great privilege to be able to address you on this historic occasion. The historic and close association which my country had with Malaya and other neighbouring countries is borne out even in very ancient Tamil Literature. In those early days, when maritime trade of the Tamilians extended up to China, Malaysia must have played a very important role as the Centre of Trade for ships from Tamil Nad going to different places like Philippines, Cambodia, Java and other parts.

The ancient Sangam Classic "Pattinappalai" refers to the variegated merchandise which were imported from many places like Java, Sumathra, Malaysia and China and to the assorted goods which were exported from Tamil Nad to these countries. From these references found in Tamil classics, one can be sure that the contacts between these countries were very close, sustained, and intimate. Again, religion also seems to have played an impor-

tant role in bringing together the people of South East Asia, and the people of India in general, and of Tamil Nad, in particular. The world famous temple at Angkorwat bears witness to the architectural grandeur of Tamil Nad which has spread over to this part of the world also. Right from those days, contact and communication between Malaysia and Tamil Nad were a continuous process and this affinity has been intensified by the modern communications which the current 20th Century has gifted us.

Malaysia is a shining example of a country where a multilingual and multireligious society exists in complete amity and harmony. I am impressed by the unity and happiness found in this country where several distinct groups mix freely and work together as Malaysian nationals. Perhaps, it is due to this integration and oneness of feeling of the people that the multisided Development Programmes are being well executed. Your economic well being and prosperity are the results of Planning with foresight of your Prime Minister, a great statesman who should be congratulated for being chiefly responsible for leading this nation to its present state of peace and happiness.

It is quite fitting that the Prime Minister of this great country should inaugurate this Conference of Tamil Studies. The delegates will no doubt be aware of the great contribution made to the Tamil Literature and the spread of "Bhakti Cult" by the Saiva Saints, Sambandar and Manickavasagar. It is only appropriate that the Honourable Ministers, Tan Sri V. T. Sambantham, P.M.N., and Mr. Manickavasagam, J.M.N., P.J.K., who bear these hallowed names should take such a keen interest in organising this International Conference of Tamil Studies. We greatly appreciate the valuable contribution they have so devotedly made for the conduct of the present Conference which I am sure will prove a great success.

I remember, this idea of convening an International Conference on Tamil Studies was mooted a few years ago in the Tamil Development and Research Council, an organ of the Government of Madras wherein Father Thaninayakam was also a member. The Members of the Tamil Development and Research Council received this proposal with enthusiasm then. The proposal was further pursued at the International Conference of Orientalists held at Delhi

in 1964, but could not be implemented on account of the inability of the Foreign Delegates to extend their stay in India.

I am glad that the Malayan University and the National Education (Indian Schools) Development Council (Malaya) have taken the lead in convening this Conference, and I note with pleasure that Rev. Father Thaninayagam has pursued the proposal vigorously and made it a 'fait accompli' today. Now that Malaysia has started this project, it gives me special pleasure to propose that the Second Conference be held at Madras early in 1968.

I have great pleasure in inviting all the delegates and observes participating in this Conference to attend the Second Conference at Madras.

I am sure with your cooperation we can make it a great success in disseminating the knowledge and culture of this ancient language of ours.

I take this opportunity to announce that the Government of Madras and the University of Madurai are considering a proposal to establish a *Department of South East Asian Studies with special reference to the Malay Language* and we would welcome the cooperation of the Government and the University of Malaya in this regard. Before concluding, I would like to express on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government and the people of Tamil Nad and also on behalf of the delegates and observers attending this Conference, our most sincere thanks and appreciation to the Prime Minister and the Government of Malaysia and the Organising Committee of the Conference for the excellent arrangements made and the warm hospitality shown which have made Kuala Lumpur, 'a home away from home' for each one of us.

Research in South-East Asia and in the Far-East*

JEAN FILLIOZAT

The cultural and commercial intercourse between India and South-East Asia across the ocean as well as the propagation of the Buddhist religion and of Indian sciences along the ways of central Asia towards the Far East, have been prominant since nearly twenty centuries. Many archaeological remains, records of travellers, and texts and inscriptions in Indian languages existing in all Eastern Asia are direct testimonies of this fact. Borrowings of Indian words in the languages of this part of the world, and Indian features in the original arts of many countries are also indirect evidence of the same fact.

In the first part of the last century the view was generally accepted among scholars that the main current of Indian culture toward the East had been Buddhistic. It seemed sure Hindu religion, as deriving from the Vedic or brahmanical one, was not a missionary religion and was not exported from India. It was easy in order to support this opinion to quote from Manu or from the other later sources in the literature of the Darmasastras prohibiting sea voyage for brahmins. But in fact, this opinion was wrong. Since the second part of the last century a lot of brahmanical remains and Sanskrit Hindu inscriptions were recorded in South-East Asia and Indonesia. Even literal Vedic quotations appear in Indo-Chinese and Indonesian documents. The only problem which remained till recently was how to reconcile the prohibition of exportation of Vedic lore beyond the seas with the fact of this very exportation, and by whom the Vedic, Brahmanical and Hindu religions were brought and established in South-East Asia?

* PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

This last problem is now going to be solved, thanks to Tamil research and to Sanskrit research in Tamil Nad, as well as in the S.-E. Asia itself. At first Tamil research had not been considered as very important in this matter because, in S.-E. Asia, Sanskrit inscriptions referring only to Sanskrit literature are much more numerous than the Tamil ones which also are ordinarily of later dates. So, it seemed the main influence from India towards the East was from Northern India. Tamilians themselves called Sanskrit *vadamoḷi* 'Northern Language'. But that does not mean they have not used it. On the contrary, if we draw a complete enquiry into the culture of Tamil Nad as it was all along the centuries, we observe Tamil pulavar not only have produced Tamil masterpieces of poetry and learning, but also have contributed much in Sanskrit to Literature and Philosophy. We have just to refer to the names of such great philosophers of world fame as Sankaracarya or Ramanuja, or to authors like Dandin who were *ubhayakavi.*

Moreover we must observe when Tamilians wrote in Sanskrit they were not always nearly following a Northern tradition. Very often they simply used Sanskrit as a language of general communication in order to more widely propagate ideas from their own tradition. Ramanuja, for example, gave a scholastic Sanskrit garment to the theology of Nammalvar who inspired him and who before him had sung in his love for God:

> *உயர்வற உயர்நலம் உடையவன் யவன் அவன்*
> *மயர்வற மதிநலம் அருளினன் யவன் அவன்*
> *அயர்வறும் அமரர்கள் அதிபதி யவன் அவன்*
> *துயராறு சுடாடி தொழுது எழுஎன் மனமே!*

Let us now consider the most ancient of the Sanskrit inscriptions of Indo-China which was found at Vocanh near the eastern coast of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, in Vietnam. According to palaeographical evidence it belongs to the second or third century A.D. The shape of the characters does not clearly indicate if the writing was introduced from South India rather than from any other part of India. But the contents of the inscription are significant. In spite of the fact the lines are not all well preserved we have the name of the king who ordered to carve out the text. This name is Sri Mara. At the beginning of the study of this inscrip-

tion, it was thought the king was a Buddhist because he was praising 'compassion', *karuna*. The name 'Mara' also seemed to evolve Buddhism. But it would have been very strange if the king had designated himself as Mara, that is, as an enemy of Buddhism. We know *karuna,* corresponding to the Tamil *arul,* is Brahmanical or Hindu as well as Buddhistic, and the name *Mara* in Sanskrit must now be recognised as merely being a transliteration of the famous Tamil title of Pandyan kings *MaRaN*. Because the letter *R* of Tamil *MaRaN* is lacking in Sanskrit, it was replaced by the other one and so the Tamil word become similar to the name of the Buddha's antagonist who was surely out of consideration there.

The use of the Sanskrit language by Tamilians and the introduction of a famous Tamil royal title under a sanskrit garment was quite natural at the time, that is, in the first centuries of the Saka era. In this period not only the Dravidian languages were by their very origin different form the Indo-aryan ones but also they most probably were already highly differentiated from each other. Above all, the Indo-aryan prakrits of the North, also in use in the South with the Jain ardhamagadhi and with the Buddhist Pali were much different from each other. Only Sanskrit was known at least by educated peoples everywhere and regularly taught in special schools conducted throughout India. It was the only means of general communications as Latin has been during centuries in Europe and as English is today in the greatest part of the world; Sanskrit was used for secular and practical purposes, owing to this character of common language medium. In most of the official inscriptions it replaced the Prakrits and, at the same time the compromise between the old Buddhist Prakrit text and the widespread usage of the classical Sanskrit gave birth to the so-called Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit which was gradually replaced by classical Sanskrit itself.

In Tamilnad, both Tamil and Sanskrit were classical. Intercourse between the Tamil kingdom and the Magadha kingdom are evidensed since the end of the fourth century B. C. The famous Greek ambassador to the court of Candragupta, heard at Pataliputra the story of Tadadakai i.e., Mīnātci of the Pandyan kingdom, without having ever visited this country. In the middle of the

third century B.C. Asoka inscriptions refer to the three Tamil kingdoms. Brahmanical lore was then well known in the South, at least in Kalinga, since Asoka has expressed his sorrow for the death of many brahmanas during his war to conquer Kalinga.

In any way, many poems in the Sangam Literature show us how wide and deep was the knowledge some Tamil pulavar had of Vedic and Sanskrit culture. They often refer to Vedic rites, using in these references either Tamil or Sanskrit words, saying *vēḷvi* or *yāgam, kēḷvi* or *Sruti, maRai* or *Veda* etc. ... indifferently. The sixth poem of *PuRanāNūru,* by Kārikilār, in honour of PāṇḍiyaN Palyākacālai Mutukuṭumi Peruvaluti, show us this king followed Siva's cult and also patronised, at the same time, Vedic ritual.

According to the tradition, the Vedic ritual is intended for general welfare of the kingdom, i.e. for *Bhukti,* the cult of Siva rests upon the Agamas and leads to reach both *Bhukti* and *Mukti,* the Supreme Goal. In Tamilnadu, both Vedic and Agamic rituals were prescribed in Sanskrit books, but the religious feelings, the utterances of devotion or *Bhakti* to God have been sung in Tamil by devotees like the Nayanār and the Ālvar. Tamil has been the language of the heart, Sanskrit the medium of technical teaching and official proclamations. Both were mastered by Tamilians everywhere they went. Abroad, they naturally used Sanskrit for official and practical purposes and our epigraphical remains are mainly official. That is why they are chiefly in Sanskrit.

In these conditions, no wonder if we find explanations of many things in South-East Asia through researches both in Tamil and in the Sanskrit literature of the Tamilnadu.

That is the case for example in Ancient Cambodia, Kambujadesa. In this country, at the very beginning of the ninth century, in 802 A.D. according to several Sanskrit or old Cambodian inscriptions, the king Jayaraman II ordered for the performances of a ritual for the establishment of the *devarāja* on a mountain called Mahendraparvata. This *devarāja* is subsequently referred to in other inscriptions as established in various places in the shape of a linga by different kings. *Devarāja,* 'King of Gods' is a usual designation of Indra, but in spite of the fact that the mountain was

called after Mahendra, it was not possible to accept an identification of this *Devarāja* with Indra. On another side, the parallel designation of the *Devarāja* in old Cambodian inscriptions was *kamaratan jagat ta rāja* which means 'the Lord of Universe who is king'. So, it was supposed and generally admitted till recently, *rāja* was applying to the human Cambodian king and a new proposed translation of *devarāja* was 'the king who is God', 'the divine king'. It was taken for granted the corresponding *linga* established in the name of the king was a material symbol embodying the personal essence of the king or the kingshi

But we find in Tamil literature a much easier solution. Mānikkavacakar, in his *Tiruvacakam* refers several times to Siva as seated on the Mayentiram mountain, i.e., the Mahendraparvata, as the King of Gods, these Gods being enumerated as Brahma, Vishnu and Indra. Also at the same time, Siva is the real king of the country as well as of the whole universe. So, Jayavarman II has simply performed a *Sivalingasthāpanam* following a conception which is revealed to us by Mānikkavacakar and not the classical Sanskrit sources, so far as we know.

This does not mean this representation of Siva was only Tamil and proper to Mānikkavacakar. Tamilians were not coming alone from India to Combodia. We have also clear references in the inscriptions of Indians originating from other parts of India, and the Saivite religion belongs to all India. But we know by this example, researches in Tamil literature are necessary to improve our knowledge of the intercourse between India and South-East Asia which are in Sanskrit. Tamil too is repository of universal Indian culture.

The researches in the technical books in Sanskrit which are preserved chiefly in Tamilnadu, *Sivagamas* and *Pancarātrāgamas* are also fruitful in order to understand many features of the old remains of Hindu religion in South-East Asia and Indonesia. For example there are in Cambodia huge temples in the shape of pyramids representing the Meru, according to an All India conception But some among them which seemed, according to some inscriptions or traditions, as being tombs as well as temples, are just built in the way prescribed in the Agamas for the *Samādhis* of *Yatis* or men who have obtained *Sivadiksa.* According to the

Agamas as summarised in the *Kriyādīpikā* composed by Sivagrayogi of the Tamil *Kailayaparamparai,* these samadhis may become temples. In Tamilnadu there are numerous samadhis like that, but they are ordinarily small and do not become centers of temples because there are many ancient holy places and temples. In Cambodia, on the contrary, where there were no holy traditional places for Hindu cults before the coming of Hindu peoples, the possibility to bury men having been turned into Siva himself by Agamic rites and to build temples on their Samadhis was a good way to consecrate the holy required for the cult.

This cult was finally abandoned when the countries of South Eastern Asia were converted to Theravada Buddhism or to Islam. But Thailand and Cambodia have continued to appoint groups of 'brahmanas' for Royal and state ceremonies. It is a well known fact these brahmanas have preserved ritual books in Sanskrit in the Grantha characters which belong exclusively to Tamilnadu. According to the traditions the ancestors of most of them came from places like Ramesvaram or Ramanathapuram. Some of them claimed to come from Kailasa, that means their ancestors belonged to the Kailas or Kailayaparampara of Dharmapuram and Tiruvavaturai. They cannot be considered as brahmins in the strict sense of the Dharmasastra, but brahmana has become since centuries an ordinary designation of Hindu religionists in South-East Asia. So Brahmana very often in Chinese and Arabic sources is a reference to Indian peoples of Hindu religion. In Cambodia these brahmanas are also called *baku,* according to the modern pronounciation and *pakūva* according to the orthography. It is easy to recognise in this last designation tamil *pakkuvar,* fit to term in the Saivasiddhantic use those who are 'ripe' (Sanskrit *pakva*) and entitled to perform rites involving vedic and agamic mantras.

The books of these people are actually full of Vedic and Agamic quotations. Prof. Meenakshisundaram has already published a book in Tamil on the festival called in Thailand Tiruppavai-Tiruvempavai and brought further information on the subject in this Conference.

In Indonesia, in Bali, the religion of Hindu origin which is still practised is called *Āgamatirtha.* The word *tirtha* is also used

to designate holy water received from the temple. Such a use is not general in India for the word *tirtha,* but it exists in Tamil. There are other evidences in South Asia and Indonesia of the coming of Sanskrit words through Tamilians with the specialisations or changes of meaning they have done.

So, the role played by the Tamilians in the relations between India and South-East Asia, though by no means exclusive has been very great even when they have used Sanskrit to present their culture in these countries.

This role has also been extended till the Far East. Little known archaeological and epigraphical discoveries enable us to trace the evidence of this role in China. Marco Polo, the famous Venitian traveller of the end of the Thirteenth Century had described in his travel's relation a town Zayton, in South China which was at the time a very important international market where merchants came from every part of Asia and where a strong group of Indian merchants was established. Marco Polo did not indicate the regions of India they came from. Fortunately we may now be sure at least many of them were Tamilians. One surrounding wall was built around the town in the Fifteenth Century with stone material taken from ancient buildings. During the last Sino-Japanese war a part of this wall was demolished and many old architectural and epigraphical remains were discovered. A few years ago a Chinese archaeologist published many pictures and notices of these findings. Among them we find a lot of pillars of temples, divine images and elements of the basis of a very large temple of South Indian style, slightly modified by Chinese artists who were employed in the building or sculpturing. There is an ancient image of Mahāviṣṇu, and more recent representations of lingas or of scenes like *gajendramokṣṇam* or robbing by Kṛṣṇa of the clothes of the Gopis, etc..... Also two plates with Tamil inscriptions were discovered. Photographs of these inscriptions are not complete and no full phrase is readable, but one inscription mentions Perumal, the other gives a part of a date (*cittirai māsam*). Thanks to these discoveries which give the hope of further studies we know that Indian merchants seen by Marco Polo had established both the Vaishnavite and Saivite cult, and were mostly Tamilians though it is by no means excluded that peoples of other parts

of India have also been there, along with merchants from Central Asia, Persia and even Arabia.

These few examples may be enough to give us evidence of the need for a larger and international investigation to try to cover the immense field of human activity in which Tamil speakers have cooperated with other nations during so many centuries.

That is why we are happy to be now for the first time at Kuala Lumpur, in a position to hold this International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies and to obtain the precious cooperation of so many scholars of various horizons.

Tolkāppiyar's Literary Theory

T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN

A. GENERAL THEORY

I. *Tolkāppiyam.*

Tolkāppiyam at least in parts is the earliest work in Tamil. It is a book on phonology, grammar and poetics. Therefore it implies the prior existence of Tamil literature. There is a distinction made therein between literary language and colloquial or non-literary language — ceyyuḷ and vaḻakku[1] thus implying certain literary conventions not only in grammatical forms but also in literary form and subject matter. However from the point of view of vocabulary, ordinary words, literary words, dialect words and foreign words may all come into the literary composition.[2] Though Tolkāppiyam, as stated may be earlier than the Caṅkam works, it seems to contemplate the same kind of literature.

II. *Akam and Puṟam.*

The most important aspect of this literature is the distinction between what is called akam and puṟam the exterior or the outer and the interior or the inner. I prefer to call them the poetry of the phenomenon and the poetry of the noumenon. The inner core of truth of human life is akam or love. There is a rule that in akam poetry no names are to be mentioned.[3] Akam is therefore describing an ideal or perfect human being whether man or woman but here the poetry is not describing any type. It represents the

1. Tolkāppiyar; *Tolkāppiyam;* The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society; Sutra 510, 880; Madras, 1943.
2. *Ibid.,* 880.
3. *Ibid.,* 1000.

autobiography of the individual from the fundamental universal point of view. But this gives its core of love which may be equated with a soul which is revealed through the varying personalities within the background necessarily of the multifarious aspects of Nature and History which after all form the various points of view or perspectives revealing the inner core. Each poem, as I have stated elsewhere, is "a chink in the wall of its individuality giving the glimpse of the whole universe. It is a beautiful dew drop reflecting the whole of the heavens and the earth from the individual point of view, its coign of vantage."[4]

There are various implications of this ideal love tried to be explained in Nakkīrar's commentary on Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ.[5] There were controversies on this as time went on, especially between the vedic scholars and the later day moralists on the one hand and the Tamil poets believing in the old theory of Love.[6] The idealised love, it has to be said, made it easier for Tirumūlar to identify Love with God; "aṉpe sivam."[7] This led to the mystic poetry of the Nāyaṉmārs and Āḻvārs singing in the old Akapporuḷ style.

The phenomenon is there only as an exposition of the noumenon. It is only when love attains this ideal level that it becomes akam; for, other love stories remain only puṟam. As against this, puṟam or the poetry of the phenomenon shows the experience of the varying individuals in the world, an experience which can be often dated as belonging to the historical persons. This however is not to mean that this poetry is not universal; only it raises itself to that universal level by emphasising the phenomenon.

Ultimately akam and puṟam are as the inner palm of the hand and its back.[8] Akam poetry deals with this love from the point of view of pre-marital love or post-marital love kaḷavu and kaṟpu.

4. T. P. Meenakshisundaran, *The theory of poetry in Tolkāppiyam,* Collected Papers; p. 63, Annamalainagar, 1961.

5. Iṟaiyaṉār, *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporul Urai,* p. 12; Pavanthar Kazhakam, Madras 1939.

6. S. Rajam, Ed. *Paripātal;* verse 9:12; Murray & Co., Madras, 1957.

7. Tirumūlar, *Tirumantiram;* Tiruppanantāl Sri Kasi Mutt, Verse 270 Tiruppanantāl, 1956.

8. Naccinarkkiniyar *'Commentary on Tolkāppiyam—Poruḷatikāram,'* Sutra 59, Pavanthar Kazhakam, Madras.

Puṟam deals with not only the various aspects of war then practised but also with the phenomenal victory of human life, with the greatness of men who come to be sung by poets and also with the evanescence of life inspiring man to do great acts and make himself eternal in the memory of men during the short span of his life.

III. *Anthology.*

There is one thing peculiar about this poetry; the poems consist of dramatic monologues. Tolkāppiyar enumerates certain illustrative contexts in the various aspects of akam and puṟam poetry where the character could speak and reveal a dramatic moment.[9] Therefore there is in that age no narrative poetry or epic but only a series of dramatic monologues. This is one of the important aspects of the literary theory of Tolkāppiyam.

Dandin who came to live in Tamil Nad at the end of the Seventh Century realised the importance of this literary theory about poetic anthologies and therefore spoke only of two kinds of poetry, the poetry of anthologies and the poetry of continuous narration or epic. As I have stated elsewhere, "Many a gem of purest ray serene may be hidden in the sea of experience, and many are the hidden ways of the subtle artists, working on these valuable gems. Many like the epic poets are great in weaving beautiful patterns, immortalised in the pearl necklace of a Queen or in the diamond diadem of a King—the varying dispositions of the many faceted gems satisfying the varying tastes and vanities of the rich. Some like the Caṅkam poets are great in carving out glistening and living forms of the Divine Dance [Ratna Sabhapati] or the Female Beauty, in each individual gem, infusing and vivifying the dead stone, with their life breath and mystical vision, making it, in short, the Absolute. How can this Absolute be reduced to the relative in a pattern?"[10]

9. Tolkappiyar; *Tolkāppiyam;* The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Sutras 982-988m 1004-1006, 1009, 1013, 1014, 1018, 1021, 1022, 1025, 1027, 1031, 1036-1037, Madras 1943.

10. T. P. Meenakshisundaram; *The theory of poetry in Tolkāppiyam,* Collected papers; p. 63; Annamalainagar, 1961,

Anthological literature suggests in a unique way the group poetry as I have suggested elsewhere,—"Caṅkam poetry is unique as group poetry par excellence. It has personality of its own representing the group mind and the group personality of the Caṅkam age. Taken as a whole, it satisfies all the requirements of great poetry, enumerated above. The folk songs and proverbs of an age, with their authors unknown, form a unity, as the very expression of the national personality and the language. Caṅkam poetry, though too cultured to be called folk song, consciously creates this universal personality and that is why it has been classified as a separate group in Tamil literature—the really great national poetry, not in the sense of national popularity but in the sense of being the voice of the nation in its origin. These remind us of the towering gopuram of Tanjore expressing the aspiring spiritual height of the Cōḻa age, though it is not the handiwork of any one sculptor but the work of a group of artists, each giving expression in rock to a vision of his own. It is therefore necessary to realise the importance of this conception of Caṅkam literature as a Tokai or anthology or group poetry which lies at the very root of the theory of Caṅkam poetry."

IV. *Poetic Quintessence.*

What is called vaṉappu mentioned as the last of the organs of a literary composition in the list given by Tolkāppiyar contemplates some narrative poetry or literature. But they are not as elaborately discussed as the contexts or dramatic moments of anthologies. There, amongst these vaṉappus, is tol which describes an old story. As contrasted with it, is viruntu which describes a new story. There is also the literature composed in the ordinary dialect of the common man. There is again the literature consisting of a commingling of verse and prose. The other kinds do not contemplate any continuous narrative.[11] Vaṉappu comes at the end of the list almost either as a concession to a latter age where narrative poetry has developed or as a vague remembrance of a forgotten tradition of an earliest age. In any case the cryptic explanation given for these vaṉappu, vaguely suggesting narra-

11. Tolkāppiyar; *Tolkāppiyam;* The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Sutras 1259, 1493, 1495, Madras 1943.

tive poetry against the elaboration of the dramatic moments of the anthologies, seems to suggest the prevailing poetic theory of the age related mainly to the anthologies rather than to narrative poems.

Another aspect of this literature is the attempt by the poet to capture the poetic quintessence of the dramatic moment in the form of living phrases and poetic metaphors and similies which become the life of the verse. These phrases are, as it were, the keys with which the inner treasure of poetry has to be locked. These therefore have become the names of such verses and often the immortal names of the poets themselves.. Even when this idea is elaborated as a Neṭuntokai and Pattu-p-pāṭṭu, the dramatic and poetic compression is not forgotten.

This necessitates a great and important place being given to suggestion. Apart from ordinary figures of speech mainly consisting of various kinds of metaphors and similies there is uḷḷuṟai uvamam which is an implied metaphor.[12] Here nature is described; and from that, one has to understand the implications; for instance, the buffalo treading on lotus and feeding on tiny flowers implies the extra marital relationship of the hero who leaves the heroine to suffer thereby... That age thought it was against the culture of the heroine and others to state this charge openly. There may be further implications, thus giving rise to various strata of meaning, naturally to be understood only by the real critics or sahradayas. Apart from the figures of speech, there were also other kinds of suggestions not only of the meaning but also of emotions and ideals. Iṟaicci is a general name given to this suggestion.[13] The whole theory of suggestion as conceived and developed by the Caṅkam poets, require a detailed research.

The emphasis Tolkāppiyar lays on poetic sentiments or Rasa or what is called meyppāṭu should also be understood. He speaks of eight rasas nakai or hāsya, uvakai or happiness which is something more extensive than sringāra; suffering or soka; vira or heroism physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual, iḷivaral or jugupsa or a kind of shuddering at meanness; krodha or anger, bhaya or

12. *Ibid.,* 992-994, 1244.
13. *Ibid.,* 1175-1177.

fear and adbhuta or wonder.[14] Tolkāppiyar further elaborates the various emotions which play an important part in the various dramatic moments of Akam poetry.[15] There is a separate chapter on this rasa or meyppāṭu in Tolkāppiyar thus showing the importance of these poetic sentiments intended to be suggested by a description of the appropriate time and place of the story, which are in turn made alive by a graphic description of Nature including the plants and the animals on the one hand, and the human society on the other and finally by that story made clear through the behaviour and speeches of the hero and the heroine amidst their followers and relatives. The implications of this story of meyppāṭu has also to be worked out in detail by further research.

V. *Conventions.*

Naturally, for understanding such dramatic monologues, it is necessary to be familiar with the conventions of such a poetry. For interpreting such a verse, it is necessary, as emphasised by Tolkāppiyar to know who is the speaker, to whom it is spoken, its dramatic context in akam or puṟam; the time implied therein as a looking back or as a looking forward and the various strata of meaning and rich suggestion because such poetry believing as it does in compression should have recourse to an elaborate theory of suggestion and meyppāṭu or rasa or poetic sentiment.[16] There is also the poetic convention about interpreting long drawn sentences, its peculiar linkages and ellipses.

B. THEORY IMPLIED IN VERSIFICATION

I. *Enumeration of Organs.*

I may pass on to quote from my essay on the theory of poetry in Tolkāppiyam,[17] an organic theory of poetry where the sounds and the meanings together form one united whole. The ceyyul iyal or the chapter on literary composition in Tolkāppiyam starts by enumerating its various constituents of a verse as its organs where we find enumerated both the aspects of form and matter,

14. *Ibid.*, 1197.
15. *Ibid.*, 1207-1214.
16. *Ibid.*, 1441 etc., 1445 etc., 1452 etc., 1457 etc., 1460, 1462 etc.
17. T. P. Meenakshisundaran; *The theory of poetry in Tolkāppiyam*, Collected papers; pp. 55, 56; Annamalainagar, 1961.

not only the poetic form but also the phonological and morphological form. [1] The alphabetical sounds or phonemes [Eḻuttu]; [2] their duration [Māttirai]; [3] their knitting together into syllables [Acai]; [4] the various permutations and combinations of these syllables as feet [cir]; [5] the varied integrations of these feet into lines [ati]; [6] the caesura- the coincidence with the metrical and grammatical pause [yāppu]; [7] the lexical tradition [marapu]; [8] the basic poetic intonations or fundamental poetic tunes so to say [tūkku]; [9] the innumerable garland-like patterns of the metrical weldings such as assonance and rhyme totai; [10] *the import or the purport of the verse, controlling and vivifying all these parts, so as to make them expressive of the self same purport* [nōkku]; [11] the basic verse patterns as so many permanent natural sound configurations of the idiom of the language [pā]; [12] the length or dimensions of the verses [aḷavu]; [13] here comes subject matter the harking back to the ideal behaviour patterns of an ennobling humanity [tiṇai]; [14] their varying main currents of activity [kaikōḷ]; [15] the speaker [kūṟṟul]; whose expression is the poem; [16] the person to whom the poem is spoken [keṭpōr]; [17] the place [kālam] and [18] the time of the poem [kālam]; [19] the resulting effect of purpose of the verse [payaṉ]; [20] the sentiment for emotion bubbling forth therein; [21] here comes to poetic syntax the elliptical construction or the yearning after completion of the sense, at every stage of its progress [eccam]; [22] the context making the meaning [muṉṉam]; [23] the underlying universality [poruḷ]; [24] the ford in the poetic current where the particularity enters into the flow of poetry or the particularity of the poetic aspect of the verse [tuṟai]; [25] the great linkings or the retrospective and prospective constructions [māṭṭu]; [26] the colour of the rhythm of the verse [vaṇṇam]; and [27] the eightfold poetical facades [vaṉappu] or kinds of poetry or poetic composition.[18]

II. *Their Singnificance.*

At first this may sound a confused conglomeration but a careful analysis and understanding will reveal the great organic

18. Tolkāppiyar, *Tolkāppiyam;* The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Sutra 1259, Madras 1943.

theory of poetry as conceived by Tolkappiyar. Some of the constituents of the verse, like the letters or phonemes, their duration, the syllables, the feet, the garland-like weldings, the lines and intonations are elaborations of our phonetic experiences, whilst the resulting sound configurations, the rhythms, the dimensions, and the poetic tunes are prosodic elaborations of such an experience. All these hypnotise the reader, by their basic poetic music, and make him move and heave with the poem. He stands enchanted and hyponotised believing in the subject matter and becoming one with it, carried away by the multitudinous concatenation of canorous sounds of varying durations, modified by breaths; frictions, trills, liquids, hard and soft explosions, enriched by oral and nasal resonances, and divided into happy collections of significant and natural syllabic pulsations, which by their flow, by their permutations and combinations form into various waves of feet, which in their turn move with the poetic mood, by their very force of movement fastening themselves into varying patterns of wreaths or eddies of differing directions and angles of assonance and rhyme; the multifarious dispositions of these lines, giving rise, on this poetic march to varied and variegated poetic tunes, resulting in basic configurations of different rhythms of many a hue and many a facade.

Here arises what Elliot has called the auditory imagination. The other organs of the verse like the meaning made clear by the context, the elaborate ramifications by allusions and suggestions glowing into life, by sweet remembrances as described at length by Prof. Richards, the lexical traditions of words and their significance, the elliptical construction or the yearning for the predicate after every pause in the continuous flow of the sense making the whole a continuity, and the retrospective and prospective constructions as looking backward and forward to bring about a well known organised unity, are but ordinary grammatical themes. There are the various ways in which the reader's understanding of a poem and his usual grasp of the meaning are utilised for swaying his mind hither and thither, his mind, thereby heaving up with the crest of the poetic wave and ebbing away with its trough, and his hypnotised intellect, reasoning with the music and meaning of the poem, and thereby, becoming one with the theme.

The remaning constituents of the verse are its speaker, the persons addressed, the time and place, the effect, the sentiment, the generality, the particularity and the universality of the poem, the last head reminding us of Jung's "archetypes and the unconscious racial and individual memories". These are all what one is accustomed to consider under the head of meaning and subject matter. These form the poetic theme in its concrete and specific reality, vivified by its glowing emotion, appealing to every heart by its universality or archetype, becoming of momentous value, as the expression of a fundamental mode of intrinsically ennobling human behaviours; its value carrying with itself the imprimatur of personal experience. The value of a work of art, as Read suggests, consists not merely in the progressive organisation of impulses for freedom and fullness of life according to Richards, but also of the open recognition of a moral sanction which is, in the old phraseology, revealed to the artist. The eight fold facades and the import of the parts are attempts at telescoping these various strata of poetry, viz., the sound, the music, the significance, its sweep and development, the emotion and the final experience. Everything, thus, appears to be of great importance in the final make up of the poetic personality of the verse, reflecting the personality of the poet.

Literary Theories in Early Tamil— Ettuttokai

M. VARADARAJAN

0. *Introduction*

0.1 The eight anthologies called Eṭṭuttokai form part of early Tamil literature known as Sangam literature written eighteen cenuries ago. They consist of two thousand three hundred and seventy-one poems varying from small stanzas of three lines in Aiṅkuṟunūṟu to stanzas of forty lines in Puṟanāṉūṟu. There are four hundred and seventy poets known either by their proper names or by causal names called from their work. The authors are unidentified in the case of a hundred stanzas. The poets belonged to different parts of Tamilnad and to different professions. Some of them were very popular like Kapilar, Nakkirar and Avvaiyar and some others are rarely remembered by their names. Yet a general harmony prevails throughout these eight anthologies. The tone and temper of the age is reflected in all their poems with a singular likeness. They were moulded according to certain literary conventions or traditions that prevailed in the Sangam age. Yet they reveal the individual genius of the poets who sang them.

0.2 The convention of the later days that poetry should deal with the four aspects of life, viz., aṟam (*virtue*), poruḷ, (wealth and politics), iṉpam (love and pleasure) and vīṭu (salvation), was not prevalent,[1] in those early days. The poets sang either of Akam or Puṟam. Akam dealt with ideal love and Puṟam with the rest, viz., war, munificence, etc.

1. Nannūl, 10.

0.3 Of the eight anthologies five are on Akam, two on Puṟam, and one on both. Six of them are in 'akaval' metre which is a kind of blank verse, interspersed with alliterations and rhymes. The poems on Akam as well as Puṟam theme are written in this metre and its regulated and subtle music adds to the poetic beauty. This metre is a simple but wonderful instrument which causes no impediment to the freedom of expression of the poet. It has been found to be an appropriate and natural medium for the expression of the valuable experience of the poets.

The other two anthologies that are not written in 'akaval' metre are Kalittokai and Paripāṭal. The poems of Kalittokai are in Kali metre which is well known for its dramatic and lyrical qualities and which, according to Tolkāppiyaṉār,[2] is well suited to express the emotions of the lovers. There is repetition of certain lines and phrases and this, added to the haunting music of the metre, is very appealing.

Paripāṭal is a metre full of rhythm and music and the anthology known by this name consists of songs composed in this metre. There are religious poems as well as those on love-themes. The love-theme is worked against the background of bathing festivities. These songs were sung in different tunes as is evident from the notes on the music at the end of these. The names of the musicians who set tunes to these songs are also mentioned therein.

1. *'Akam' Poetry*:

1.1 In the poems on Akam, the aspects of love of a hero and a heroine are depicted. The story of love is never conceived as a continuous whole. A particular moment of love is captured and described in each poem as the speech of the hero or the heroine or the lady-companion or somebody else. There are one thousand eight hundred and fifty poems of this type in five anthologies, viz., Akanāṉūṟu, Naṟṟiṇai, Kuṟuntokai, Aiṅkuṟunūṟu and Kalittokai. One may expect a sort of monotonous repetition in these hundreds of poems on more or less the same aspects of ideal love. This is what one finds in all the Indian arts, sculpture or iconography or music. But when looked at carefully, the individual genius of

2. Tolkāppiyam, Porulatikāram, 53.

the poet is revealed through his contribution. He gives something which is already familiar to the readers, something which assures them of a continuity of the past art, but he gives it with his fine colourings distinguished by his own rich experience and imagination. And thus instead of monotony we feel a surprise that so many variations of the same theme should be possible.

The first attempt to arrange all the contexts of such love poetry into a series of continuous succession of speeches giving as it were the story of two lovers is found several centuries later in the 'kovai' species.[3]

1.2 Love was dealt with in five 'tiṇais', each pertaining to a particular region with its own suitable season and appropriate hour of the day and its flora and fauna and characteristic environment. The aspect of love is called the uripporul or the subject matter of the 'tiṇai'; the region, the season and the hour are called the 'mutal poruḷ' or the basic material; the objects of environment are denoted as 'karupporuḷ'. Kūriñci-tiṇai or the clandestine union of the lovers is characteristic of the mountainous region; mullai-tiṇai or the life at home spent in expectation of the return of the hero is set with the background of the forest region; maruta-tiṇai or the sulky life the agricultural tract as its background; neytal-tiṇai or the life of despair is characteristic of the sea coast; pālai-tiṇai or the life of desolation in separation is depicted in arid tract. Literary tradition in Tamil has so closely associated the sloping hills and the winding streams with the adventures of the lover coming to his sweetheart at midnight, the early winter and the mullai blossoms of the forests with the patient waiting of the wife for her husband's return from the battlefield, the fertile paddy fields and the roaming buffaloes with the careless life of the hero in the company of a harlot, the backwaters and the seashore with the heart-rending despair of the heroine and finally the waterless arid tract of the withered trees and emaciated beasts and birds with the separation of the hero from the heroine in pursuit of wealth in a far off country.

3. 'Kōvai' is one of the ninety-six kinds of literary works. It consists of 400 verses in a particular metre, each dealing with an aspect of love, and all knit together in such a manner, that the whole appears to be a story of a lover and his sweetheart depicted with continuity.

1.3 Tolkāppiyaṉār clarifies the relative importance of these three components of tiṇai.[4] According to him karupporuḷ is more important than mutalporuḷ, and uripporuḷ is more important than the other two. In other words, the aspect of love is the most important part, the objects of environment come next and the region, the season and the hour are less important. There are a few poems in the anthologies which have no mutalporuḷ but only the other two a few poems have neither karupporuḷ nor mutalporuḷ but only uripporuḷ or the aspect of love.

1.4. The poems on the theme of love are all in the form of dramatic monologues. The hero, the heroine or the lady-companion seems to appear on the stage and express his or her feelings and thoughts. Appropriate natural scenery forms the background. The poet has no place on this poetic stage. He cannot express his own ideas or feelings except through the actors, the hero, the heroine and others in the drama of love. What have been expressed, have to be taken as the feelings and thoughts of the characters imagined and created by him. The poet merges himself in the characters he creates and does not, as in subjective poetry or in ordinary narrative, describe or relate in his own person and from the outside. The dramatic element commonly appears more or less prominently in the shape of dialogue. There might have been some autobiographical material incorporated by the poet in such poems, but it is not always easy to distinguish those elements. These are dramatic lyrics, and in spirit and method subjecetive poems, but the subjective element pertains, not to the poet himself, but to some imagined characters into whose feelings and thoughts he gives vicarious expression.

1.5 But there is this great difference between the early eight anthologies and the later works as regards the men and the women dealt with in them. In the mediaeval epics and other literary works, the common man and woman never attained the status of hero and heroine, whereas in the poems on love the ordinary man and woman either in the mountainous region or in other regions are depicted as the hero and the heroine.

1.6 Tolkappiyanar has explained the literary conventions of his age and stated that he based his observations on the usages

4. Tolkāppiyam, Porulatikāram, 3.

honoured by the practice of the great poets (patalut-payinravai natunkalai).[5] He has clearly noted in a '*nurpa*' that in the poems on Akam, the name of the hero or the heroine, should never be mentioned. In the poems on love found in Ettuttokai, there is not a single stanza wherein the hero or the heroine is mentioned by name. The hero is mentioned in these poems simply as the man of the mountain, the man of the town, the person of the sea coast, etc. So also the heroine is referred to as the woman of the hill tribes, the girl of the peasants, the daughter of the fisherman, etc. The poets never wanted the readers to identify the hero and the heroine with historical persons. As Professor T. P. Meenakshisundaranar puts it, Akam poetry "expresses not something to be dated with reference to any particular person",[6] and the aspect of love depicted in it is intended to be universal and common to all times. "The majority of the world's great lyrics" says Hudson,[7] "owe their place in literature very largely to the fact that they embody what is typically human rather than what is merely individual and particular". Every reader finds in the love-lyrics of the early Tamil anthologies the expression of such experiences and feelings in which he himself is fully able to share. Thus, by prohibiting the mention of the names of the hero and the heroine in these lyrics the literary tradition in Tamil has preserved Akam poetry pure and enabled it to give outward forms to the inner feelings not of the individual but of the ideal man and woman.

1.7 Nature is used to enrich the suggestive nature of poetry and this kind of suggestions through some description of Nature is called 'iraicci'. When the hero has been meeting his sweetheart at night during his pre-marital relationship, the lady–companion desires to impress on him the necessity of hastening the marriage and asks him to come and meet her during daytime. She specifies a place for the meeting of the lovers during day time and describes it as the place where the honeycombs hang, the trees are full of ripe fruits and the creepers have blossoms in abundance. She expects the hero to understand from this description that a number

5. *Ibid.*

6. Meenakshisundaran, T. P., A History of Tamil Literature, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, 1965, p. 26.

7. Hudson, W. H., An Introduction to the Study of Literature, London, II Ed. 1946, p. 97.

of people will frequent the spot attracted by the honey, the ripe fruits and the fragrant flowers and thus indirectly forbids him from coming at daytime as well as at night and urges him to marry and avoid such clandestine meetings.[8] Similarly when he frequently comes at daytime, she requests him to come during nights and describes the frontyard of the house as adorned by the punnai trees with fragrant blossoms and the palmyra trees with the nests of anril birds. The suggestion herein is that at night the anril birds are so close to the house that they keep the heroine awake throughout the night by their heart-rending cries;[9] here is also the indirect urge on him to marry early and settle himself in an inseparable life.

1.8 In some kinds of descriptions especially in love songs of maruta-tinai, Nature is used in allegories called 'ullurai uvaman' or 'the implied simile'. All the objects of Nature and their activities stand for the hero, the heroine and others and their activities in the drama of love. The latter are not at all mentioned but only suggested through the former. It is simile incognito which leaves it to the reader to discover it. The commentator Peraciriyar explains it as a type resorted to make the literary expressions more beautiful and apt.[10]

An otter enters a lotus tank, scatters the vallai creepers, seizes the vāḷai fish amidst them, feeds upon it and returns in the early morning to its rattan bush.. The heroine describes this in order to blame her husband on his return from a harlot's house. She suggests to him that she is aware of his infidelity, of his loose morals, of pleasing the harlot's parents and relatives and of returning home at dawn for a formal stay. Here the otter stands for the hero, the vāḷai fish for he harlot, the 'vallai' creepers for her parents and the rattan bush for his own house.[11]

In such a description, the speaker hesitates to express certain things openly but desires to dwell on minutely in a wordy caricature of a familiar incident in Nature and through it more effectively conveys to the listener all the feelings and thoughts.

8. Akananuru, 18.
9. Ibid., 360.
10. Tolkappiyam, Porulatikaram, 30.
11. Akanānūru, 6.

1.9 The anthologies are abounding in apostrophes. The hero or the heroine addresses the sea, the moon, the wind, the crow, the crab, a tree or a creeper and expresses the grief of the heart or requests one of them to sympathise with him or her.

The heroine addresses the sea and enquires it as to why it cries aloud even at midnight and who caused such sufferings.[12] She also asks it whether it cries aloud in sympathy with the misery of those pining in separation just like herself or whether it has been forsaken by anybody as in her own case.[13] She blames the northwind as merciless and unsympathetic.[14] "Oh, chill north wind! we never meant any harm to you. Please do not cause further suffering to this forsaken and miserable soul of mine."[15] She remarks that it mercilessly blows at midnight to afflict her in her loneliness without any pity for her utter despair and bids it blow through the country where the hero is so as to remind him of her and make him return.[16] The hero in the distant country feels the effects of the northwind but only thinks of his sweetheart suffering lonely in the distant village and requests it not to blow through her village and cause her more distress.[17]

2. *'Puram' poetry*:

2.1. There are some 'arruppatai' or guide-songs in the two anthologies, Purananuru and Patirruppattu. In these, the bard, either a musician or dancer or actor (panaṉ, viṟali or kuttaṉ) who has received gifts from a generous patron guides another bard suffering from poverty and directs him to the same patron for help. Descriptions of the way to the city of the patron and praises of his endearing qualities abound in such guide-songs. In Purananuru, there are seven poems as guide-songs of the musicians, four of the women dancers, and three of the literary artists. Patirruppattu contains one guide-song of the musician and five of the

12. Kuruntokai, 163.
13. Kalittokai, 129.
14. Akanānūru, 243.
15. Naṟṟinai, 196.
16. Akanānūru, 163.
17. Kuruntokai, 235.

women dancers. All of them are in accordance with the exposition of Tolkappiyanar regarding the form of such songs.[18]

2.2 The elegies in Purananuru are frankly personal and are high tributes to the deadpatrons and friends. A few of them extended to be poems of some philosophical significance. They are the outpourings of the emotions of the poets who were so much attached to the patrons. In these elegies we don't find such similitude of a shepherd mourning for a companion as we have in the pastoral elegies in western literature.[19] These elegies in Tamil are genuine and spontaneous. There is no artificiality in them. They express intimate and personal grief. They cannot be charged of artificiality as in Milton's 'Lycidas'. Like Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', the ancient Tamil elegy speaks in its own character and calls things by real instead of allegorical names. We need not penetrate a disguise to feel the poet's personal grief. The ancient Tamil elegies are entirely free from any conventional bucolic machinery.

2.3 There is one peculiarity to be noted in these anthologies. Whenever the poets wanted to express their gratitude to their royal parons, or their admiration of the generosity and valour of some chieftains, they did so through their compositions on 'Puram' theme, the theme intended for these. Besides this, they also made use of their poems on Akam to introduce the glory of their patrons by way of comparison or by mentioning their mountains or forests as background for the drama of love depicted in such poems.

The scandal about the association of the hero with a harlot is said to be more widespread than the joyous uproar of the army of the Pandiya king when it defeated and chased the armies of the

18. Tolkāppiyam, Porulatikāram, 18.

19. Walter W. Greg, in his 'Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama' (p. 134) writes on Milton's Lycidas: The poem, in common with the whole class of allegorical pastorals, is undoubtedly open to the charge of artificiality, since, in truth, the pastoral, garb can never illustrate, but only distort and obscure subjects drawn from other orders of civilization. .... The dissatisfaction felt by many with Lycidas was noticed by Dr. Johnson when he wrote: "It is not to be considered the effusion of real passion, for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions .... When there is leisure for fiction there is little grief."

two enemy kings in the battle at Kutal.[20] In an apostrophe to the north wind, the lady companion says that the wind which now during the separation of the lover causes so much distress to the heroine will disappear when the lover returns home. Therein she mentions that the north wind will then run away like the nine chieftains who were defeated in a single day by the great Cola king Karikalan̲ and who ran away leaving all their nine umbrellas in the battlefield at Vakai.[21] In another stanza the lady companion consoles the distressed heroine that there is no room for any suffering and assures her that the hero will never desert her to seek wealth even if it amounts to possession of the Elil hills of Konkan̲a Nannan.[22]

Some of these poems have long and elaborate descriptions of the achievements of patrons and give the impression that though they are on Akam theme, the aim of the poet was only to praise the achievements of their patrons and that the theme of love served as a formula or means to serve this purpose. But it is not always so. As Dr. K. K. Pillai observes,[23] "it had become almost a convention with the poets of that age to portray the feelings or reactions of lovers by instituting comparisons with prominent political occurrences. The wide popularity which they had attained provided the temptation for the poets to import them into their comparisons so as to make the descriptions impressive and realistic."

The commentators of Tolkappiyam interpret 'nurpa' No. 155 in Porulatikaram so as to admit and explain such introduction of the glory and attainments of the patrons in poems on the theme of love.

2.4 The ancient poets were well known for their self-respect and dignity and they felt it very delicate to approach a chieftain and directly ask him for a gift. But they found it agreeable to please them by singing the glory of his ancestors or his own achievements or praising the beauty or fertility of his mountains

20. Akanānūru, 116.
21. *Ibid.*, 125.
22. Nar̲r̲inai, 391.
23. Journal of the Madras University—Humanities, Vol. XXX, No. 2, January 1959.

and forests, and thus indirectly indicate to him their request for his gift. They found this a useful device to serve their purpose as direct asking did not suit their sense of honour. This is evident from the poem of Mocikiraṉar in Puṟanāṉuṟu, wherein he stated "It is difficult for me to ask you for a gift. But I find it easier to praise the Konperunkanam hills of yours."[24]

Even Kapilar, who was more a close friend of him than a court poet of the great patron Pari, has written more lines in praise of his Parampu hills than those on the patron himself.[25]

3. *General*

3.1 The sun, the moon, the trees, the birds, the beasts and other objects of nature have been artistically described in the poems of these anthologies. But they have never been loved and described for their own sake, as in modern poetry. They have been described in early poetry only to portray some aspects of life. Nature serves only as background for or setting to the human emotions that are depicted in Akam or Puṟam poetry. They serve as frames for pictures of love or war, munificence, etc. Though Nature is thus made subservient to the human theme, yet there is free play of descriptions of nature. Nature has a prominent, though not a primary place in these anthologies. These poems treat all outward things as subordinate to the inner forces and problems upon which the interest is concentrated.[26] They essentially depict mental states and are predominantly psychological, meditative and argumentative.

3.2 The poets of Ettutokai believed in the unique effects of a few deft touches of description, not in the elaborate and full descriptions of all the parts of a beautiful object or scene. In the later days, the poets indulged in the descriptions of persons from head to foot or from foot to head calling such descriptions கேசாதி பாத வருணனை and பாதாதி கேச வருணனை. According to Winchester,[27]

24. Puranānūru, 154.
25. *Ibid.,* 105—120.
26. Cf. the author's "The Treatment of Nature in Sangam Literature", S.I.S.S.W.P. Society, Madras, 1957, pp. 404 etc.
27. Winchester, C. T., Some Principles of Literary Criticism, New York, 1908, p. 132.

the difference between unimaginative treatment of Nature and imaginative treatment is the difference between trying to describe all one sees and rendering in a few epithets or images what one feels. The pictures of the poets of Ettuttokai consist of only a few vivid features enough to interpret and communicate their emotional experiences. They drop out of their pictures all irrelevant and unpleasant details, so that the readers' attention is concentrated upon the few features that give him a powerful and characteristic impression. Through single lines, or sometimes single epithets, the poets flash upon the readers' imagination the whole pictures. The picture of a hare by the poet Tamilk-kuttanar of Madurai may be cited as an example.[28] In one single line of four simple qualifiers and four small nouns—tūmayirk kuṛuntāl neṭuncevik kuṛumuyal (the small hare with pure fur, short legs and long ears) —the complete picture of the animal is impressively drawn. Such simple and direct words have a suggestive magical power. There is no room for exaggeration in such artistic descriptions, which are rather interpretations of the poets' experience. They have such an intensity of feeling and imagination that their descriptions do not deteriorate into exaggeration.

A Japanese painter once confessed that he had to concentrate on the bamboo for many years and still a certain technique for the rendering of the tips of bamboo leaves eluded him.[29] Word-painting is no less difficult. Many of the ancient Tamil poets have mastered this word-painting. They frequently use simple adjectives that convey with force their deep thought and experience regarding the pictures they depict.

3.3 In the descriptions of the beauty of the heroine, we find only one or two aspects of beauty artistically touched.

வெறுத்த ஏஎர் வேய்புரை பணைத் தோள்[30]

(the lady abounding in beauty and with bamboo-like shoulders)

கவரிதழ் அன்ன காண்பின் செவ்வாய்
அந்தீங் கிளவி ஆயிழை மடந்தை[31]

28. Puranānūru, 334.
29. Coomaraswamy Ananda, K., The Transformation of Nature in Art, Cambridge, 1935, p. 41.
30. Akanānūru, 2.
31. *Ibid.*, 3.

(the lady of pleasant red lips resembling the petals of 'kavir' and of sweet words, wearing fine jewels)

Even in the descriptions which extended to more than six lines and which form part of the monologues of the hero, we find that he restricts himself to two or three aspects of the physical beauty of his sweetheart and never transcends the limits of decency. Therefore the hundreds of such poems dealing with love are happily devoid of obscenity. Even the songs on the harlots and the hero's association with them are free from gross bawdiness. Sexual passions have been purged of their obscenity through dignified poetic touches.

3.4 The early poets did not like to introduce foreign or borrowed images in their poetry. They always copied direct from life and Nature. Even when they had to describe the scenes of a distant country which they had not seen, as for example those of the Ganges in floods,[32] or of the Yak at the foot of the Himalayas,[33] they did not describe them in detail but restricted themselves to the facts they knew from others and avoided the odd mixture of any incongruous details in them. Even while describing the scenes of their own country, they did not extend their descriptions beyond their own observation and experience. For example, Kapilar, a great poet of the age, who had left us the maximum number of songs, had not depicted the agricultural region; he was content to deal with the mountains and their surroundings. The poet Perunkatunko of the Cera family, celebrated for his descriptions of the arid mountains and forests, was silent about the beauties of the coastal region. Ammuvanar and other poets who had written so much on the coastal region were silent about the hills and the forests. They wrote according to the fundamental principle stressed by Hudson, "the principle that, whether his range of experience and personal power be great or small, a man should write of that which lies at his own doors, should make it his chief business to report faithfully of what he has lived, seen, thought, felt, known, for himself."[34] This sincerity or fidelity is characteristic of the poems in these early anthologies.

32. Puranānūru, 161.
33. *Ibid.*, 13; Patiṟṟuppattu, 1.
34. Hudson, W. H., An Introduction to the Study of Literature, London, II ed., 1946, p. 17.

Is Phonetic Change Universal and Inevitable?

(A STUDY BASED ON THE PHONOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF TAMIL)

A. SUBBIAH

Introductory

> Norms and normative laws *can* be made and decision or convention to observe them or to alter them... it is therefore man who is normally responsible for them; not perhaps for the norms which he finds to exist in society when he first begins to reflect upon them, but for the norms which he is prepared to tolerate once he has found out that he can do something to alter them. Norms are man-made in the sense that we must blame nobody but ourselves for them; neither nature, nor God. It is our business to improve them as much as we can... The standards are not to be found in nature. Nature consists of facts and of regularities... but nature has made us together with our power of altering the world, of foreseeing and of planning for the future, and of making far-reaching decisions ... If we consider a fact as alterable — such as the fact that many people are suffering from disease — than we can always adopt a number of different attitudes towards this fact; more especially we can decide to make an attempt to alter it; or we can decide to resist any such attempt; or we can decide not to take action at all.
>
> —Karl Popper in '*The open society and its enemies*'.

The attitude of most linguistic scientists today towards "Phonetic change" can best be described in the words of Hall who, in his expressively titled book "Leave your language alone" says:—

> Like the work of geological forces, linguistic change is, in the present state of human technology, irresistible. We may try to dam it up at one point, but it's sure to burst forth at another, and where we are least expecting it... It is futile to try to stop linguistic change; to do so, a super police-state would be

> necessary... We would do better, therefore, to cease objecting to and trying to impede linguistic change; we should accept linguistic change and its results as something entirely natural and normal.[1]

This is more or less on a par with the attitude of a person who falls under Karl Popper's second category and who, faced with the universality of disease, decides to resist all attempts to prevent disease. This attitude — to take the cue from Hall himself — calls for "shock treatment that psychiatrists often use, when a person has built up a way of life on harmful attitudes or beliefs; the psychiatrist has to sweep this false basis away before he can replace it by new, more realistic and therefore sounder ideas".[2]

2. The birth of the modern Science of Linguistics is usually ascribed to the close of the eighteenth century when Sir Williams Jones, the first great European Sanskrit Scholar, discovered the linguistic similarity between Sanskrit and some members of the Indo-European family of languages. Philology, as it was called until recently, concerned itself primarily with the comparative study of Indo-European languages — more particularly in its diachronic aspect. Literacy in those languages — even where they had been reduced to writing — was confined to a small number amongst the upper classes. Besides, the modern theory of Phonemes and the Bloomfieldian 'principle of a single symbol for a single phoneme' had not been then clearly understood with the result there was no one to one correspondence between the spoken and the written language. The restraint which a carefully designed written language exercises on the spoken language and the twice levelling processes of spelling pronunciation and pronunciation spelling were all absent and as was only to be expected the gulf between the spoken language and the written language widened, the former becoming vulnerable to changes particularly of a phonetic nature. The philologists of those days were impressed by the regularity of the phonetic changes which occurred as a result amongst different Indo-European languages. These changes were

1. Hall Jr., Robert A., *Leave your language alone,* Linguistics, Ithaca, N.Y., 1950, p. 183-184.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 7.

codified by them into what have been rather imprecisely designated as "laws" of historical linguistics e.g. "Grimm's law", "Verner's law", "the Great Vowel Shift in English" etc.

Even as late as 1917, Sturtevant said 'Linguistic Science deals very largely with linguistic change'.[3] This preoccupation amounting to obsession with 'phonetic change' led to a wide spread assumption that all languages change and change all the time. No valid grounds, theoretical or otherwise, for this assumption have been put forward, as the following quotations from linguists themselves will show:

> *Sturtevant.* As long as all members of the community confine themselves to imitating the fashions already set, no change can arise. Furthermore the conservation force of imitation varies in proportion to the size of the community; for each innovation is opposed by the influence of that part of the community which is as yet unaffected by it, and the larger the community the larger the majority against each incipient change.
>
> We might suppose, then, that language would remain forever stationary. But everyone knows that languages change.[4]
>
> *Sapir.* It is much better to admit that we do not yet understand the primary cause or causes of the slow drift in phonetics, though we can frequently point to contributing factors. It is likely that we shall not advance seriously until we study the intuitional bases of speech.[5]
>
> *Bloomfield.* Every language is undergoing, at all times, a slow but unceasing process of *linguistic change.* We have direct evidence of this change in the case of communities which possess written records of their earlier speech....The ninth-century English of King Alfred the Great, of which we have contemporary manuscript, seems to us like a foreign language;

3. Sturtevant, E. H., *Linguistic Change,* University of Chicago Press, 1917, p. 10.
4. *Ibid.,* p. 29.
5. Sapir, Edward, *Language,* Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1921, p. 196.

if we could meet English speakers of that time, we should not understand their speech, or they ours.[6]

Carroll. Whatever the ultimate status of phonetic law may prove to be, the mechanics of phonetic change have never been satisfactorily explained. Linguists know that phonetic change has occurred in the past and assume that it is also taking place at the present time, despite the tremendous pressures towards uniformity represented by mass media of communication.[7]

It is intriguing however to be told by Carroll that "American linguists have taken over from the Neogrammarian School the idea of regular sound change, but chiefly as a working hypothesis rather than as an article of faith".[8]

3. During the Middle Ages in Western Europe the language of education and religion was Latin and the grammarians of those days, who doubtless had their education through Latin rather than through their own mother tongue, thought that Latin was a universal model for language and attempted to impose the rules of Latin grammar on their own native tongues. This process of putting a round peg in a square hole produced the inevitable reaction in later days and in their aversion to the grammatical absurdities which this brought about, some linguists have cultivated a dislike for grammar altogether and would be quite willing to throw away the baby with the bath water. Hall says:

"In our country, especially, attempts to prescribe rules to set up a normative grammar, have been very widespread. . . But all such attempts have been, and will continue to be, failures. "Right" and "Wrong"' then have no meaning, as applied to language, when we use it as we have grown up speaking it, among our own family and friends . . . This factor in our speech attitudes is a relic from earlier, antidemocratic times, which accords very poorly with other aspects of our

6. Bloomfield, Leonard, *Language*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1950, p. 282.
7. Carroll, John B., *The Study of Language*, Harward University Press, 1959, p. 51.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

modern aspirations to true democracy .... Current prescriptions of "right" and "wrong" thus serve only to divide our society, and to increase further the split between upper and lower, favoured and unfavoured classes—just at the time when greater unity, not greater division, is our crying need".[9]

There seems to be more politics than linguistics in these emotion-packed statements, which one suspects is an inheritance from the days of the American revolt against the royalty and aristocracy of England in the early years of settlement. The strange thing is that, so far as the written language at any rate is concerned, Hall himself does not write as he speaks but conforms to the rules of normative grammar which all educated people adopt.

4. Another inhibitory factor in the way of a balanced approach towards the problem of language is the invidious comparison which most linguists make as between speech and writing, with a pronounced bias against the latter. Hockett says:

> The linguist distinguishes between language and writing, whereas the layman tends to confuse the two. The layman's terms "spoken language" and "written language" suggest that speech and writing are merely two different manifestations of something fundamentally the same. Often enough, the layman thinks that writing is something more basic than speech. Almost the reverse is true.
>
> Human beings have been speaking for a very long time, perhaps millions of years. Compared to this, writting is a recent invention.[10]

Gleason says:

> Most of the misunderstandings which Americans have about language arise from a failure to keep clearly in mind the nature and limitations of a written language.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 27-28.

10. Hockett, Charles F., *A course in Modern Linguistics*, Macmillan Company, New York, 1958, p. 5.

> A written language is typically a reflection, independent in only limited ways, of spoken language. As a picture of actual speech, it is inevitably imperfect and incomplete.[11]

> Written communication must be sharply distinguished from spoken. The common tendency to use "language" to refer to either indiscriminately has so frequently given rise to serious confusion, not merely among lay people, but also among professional linguists . . . . Many linguists consider all forms of writing entirely outside the domain of linguistics . . . . Nevertheless, the relationships between speech and writing are close and intimate.[12]

This approach has resulted in undue sanctity being attached to the spoken vis a vis the written form but, as the spoken form is, according to the linguist's own assumption, changing all the time while the written form is more permanent, an ever-widening cleavage between the spoken and written forms takes place and taking the historicist's view of things, many linguists try to comfort themselves and the rest of the world "for the loss of a stable world by clinging to the view that change is ruled by an unchanging law".[13]

5. Another self denying ordinance which many linguists have imposed on themselves is that they are concerned only with what 'is' and not with what 'ought to be', value-judgment being anathema to them. This attitude is of course to be expected from those who discard grammar and normative rules of speech but it has one deplorable consequence. They refuse to take up the role of the social engineer and technologist who, in the words of Popper, will put his problem like this

> If such and such are our aims, is this institution well designed and organised to save them?. . . .He will suggest ways in which they could be made more efficient in serving the one end or the other.[14]

11. Gleason, H. A., *An introduction to Descriptive Linguistics,* Holt; Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1955, p. 10.

12. *Ibid.,* p. 301.

13. Popper, K. R., *The open society and its enemies* Routledge & Kagen Paul Ltd., London, 1957, Part I, p. 14.

14. *Ibid.,* p. 23.

With the vast advances made in the Science of Linguistics, the linguist of today is pre-eminently fitted to play this role for the benefit of many linguistic communities including the English-speaking community.

The False Basis of the Current Notions of Phonetic Change

6. The hypothesis (it is nothing more) that all languages change and change all the time is based, in so far as phonetic change is concerned, on false assumptions and pessimistic attitudes and, being circumscribed by the linguists' personal experience in the investigation mostly of languages of the Indo-European family, is purely subjective.

7. The first fatal assumption most linguists make is that the *spoken* language is more important than the *written* language mainly on the ground that

> Spoken language is the primary phenomenon, and writing is only a more or less imperfect reflection of it. We all learn to understand speech before we learn to read ... we all hear more language than we read[15].....spoken language is ordinarily more flexible than written language, it leads the way in linguistic development; while written language follows at a greater or less interval[16] ... It is only the spoken language that has any independent existence, while nearly all systems of writing are the result of a compromise between tradition and the phonetic representation of speech.[17]

Some linguists have even taken the rigid attitude that written language should not be called a language at all, as if a handful of linguists have the power to restrict the connotation of the term in this arbitrary fashion, even in the narrow field of Linguistic Science. It seems to the writer totally irrelevant to raise an unproductive controversy of this nature, as the spoken and written languages are each important in their respective spheres of operation, just as the uncodified and therefore variable social conventions and usage as well as the codified laws of the State and other

15. Sturtevant, E. H., *Ibid.,* p. 1.
16. *Ibid.,* p. 1-2.
17. *Ibid.,* p. 10.

social institutions have each their role in the smooth functioning of Society. If a comparison between the spoken and written languages must needs be made, it is well to bear in mind that, although the spoken language may have been in existence for millions of years, civilization in the modern sense and progress in Science and Technology developed only with the invention of writing (possibly 6000 years ago), particularly with the invention of alphabetic and/or syllabic system of writing based on a phonemic analysis of the language. As Cohen says in the UNESCO Organ, COURIER,

> It was a moment of capital importance when man reached a clear appreciation of the internal structure of his speech and made practical use of this understanding ... As a skill possessed by more and more people, writing was thereafter to become a growing force in the development of the intellectual aspects of civilization.[18]

8. The real position is that by word of mouth you can communicate only with those immediately before you (if we exclude broadcasting), whereas through writing you can communicate with much larger numbers not only those living today but also with unborn generations. Whether linguists like it or not, the written language has an assured place in the scheme of things in Society today and we can see on all sides a tendency towards the disappearance of regional and class dialects and their replacement by the standard dialect based on the written language, spelling pronunciation (e.g. 'often' with t pronounced) and pronunciation spelling (e.g. 'ax' for 'axe' 'thru' for 'through' etc.) helping in the standardising process. Over thirty years ago, Bloomfield said:

> If there is any rivalry between speech-forms, the chances are weighted in favour of the form that is represented by the written convention; consequently, if the written convention deviates from the spoken form, people are likely to infer that there exists a preferable variant that matches the written form. Especially, it would seem, in the last centuries, with the spread of literacy and the great influx of dialect-speakers and

18. Cohen, Marcel, The Art of writing—the emergence of the Alphabet, *Courier*, Vol. 17, March 1964; p. 15.

> substandard speakers into the ranks of standard-speakers, the influence of the written form has grown—for these speakers, unsure of themselves in what is after all a foreign dialect, look to the written convention for guidance.[19]

Tauli writes:

> The conscious and as it were, artificial influences exercised by grammarians on the literary language, and through it also on the colloquial language, have been very considerable in some countries[20] .... The tradition of the literary language is naturally reinforced by factors like the obligatory standardization of language by academies or other similar institutions and the schools. Owing to the spread of universal education and to the increasing influence of the standard language, the dialects are threatened with extinction. The tendency toward the disappearance of dialects is especially strong in centralised countries like France; the same phenomenon has probably taken place also in Ancient Greece and Rome.[21]

Martinet writes:

> At the present day a definite majority of the 45 million residents of France must be unilingual French speakers which, of course, does not mean that they all speak alike. All of them could be said to make use of dialects I, i.e. different varieties of French, but this would by no means reflect the way the French react to such variations: deviations from what is felt to be the norm in matters of pronunciation are labelled 'accents'....unilingual France is expanding rapidly. The First World War was fatal to dialects II (i.e. provincial or regional) in many sections of the country[22]...in large sections of present-day rural France, dialects II are frequently understood but hardly spoken by people under forty. It is likely that the

19. Bloomfield, Leonard, *Ibid.*, p. 487.
20. Tauli, Valter, *The Structural tendencies of languages,* Suomalainen, Tiedeakatemia, Helsinki, 1958, p. 41-42.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
22. Martinet, Andre, *A Functional view of language,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, p. 114.

Second World War has sealed the fate of good many of those which had survived the first.[23]

9. In other words, instead of the spoken dialect taking the lead and dragging the written language along its ever changing path, the written language—through a rationalization of the now chaotic written form and with the help of a standard dialect based on the reorganised writing system (I shall use the term "Standard language" to indicate this dialect)—is exercising a healthy and effective restraint on the forces which divide the written language from the spoken. This I imagine, is happening even in languages like English whose written form is notoriously different from its spoken form. Thanks to the initiative taken by a non-linguist Bernard Shaw already there are new developments in adjusting scripts to the spoken word and a new forty three letter alphabet has been introduced in Britain for teaching children, with considerable success. Nicholas Gillett, Adviser on Teacher Training, UNESCO Mission to Iran, says:

> A second virtue in the new alphabet is that it makes easier the learning of foreign languages. English is an exasperating language to learn because often letters are pronounced in different ways whereas in the new alphabet they are always pronounced in the same way, and yet the two alphabets are so alike that it is easy to change from one to the other.
>
> A number of countries have already realised the significance of the new invention and the new alphabet is being used in a number of countries such as in the U.S.S.R. at Irkutsk, in Israel, in Canada and elsewhere.[24]

10. The first step in the reform of the English writing system has thus been taken and it is not too much to hope that the still remaining steps which have to be taken to bring about a one to one correspondence between the written language and the spoken one and to bring about uniformity amongst all English speakers whether in the U.K., U.S.A., Canada or Australia, in regard to

23. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

24. Gillett, Nicholas, A New Alphabet, *Courier*, Vol. 17, November, 1964, p. 33.

the phonic values of the new Alphabet will follow sooner or later. The problem will be by no means easy but, unfortunately, if their current attitude is any indication, the greatest opposition to this standardizing and stabilizing process may ironically enough spring from the professional linguists, who seem to be unable to outgrow their earlier fixations and prejudices.

11. Another erroneous assumption many linguists make in regard to "phonetic change"—although it is not always so explicitly expressed—is that these changes are almost mystic in character and cannot in all cases be explained. As Martinet says:

> This comportment of traditional linguists in the face of phonic facts actually stems from defeatism; from a speech sound changing through time, practically any thing may be expected.[25] Progress in evolutionary linguistics demands that we abandon the descriptionist and anti-explanatory ideal.[26]

Again he says:

> Sober Scholars, in spite of their reluctance to enter the realm of hypothesis, had had to make up their minds regarding the nature of phonetic changes and, in order to reach a decision, they had been compelled to consider the problem of how the obvious, if not total, regularity of sound changes could be explained.... It would seem that if languages change, as we know they do, it is, basically, because the needs of their users change, and this has been found to apply to phonology as well as to lexican, morphology or syntax. This of course involves a total revision of traditional views regarding sound changes.[27]

12. Once we accept the position that 'phonetic change' should be and can be explained, the whole problem becomes simple. Phonetic change, as defined by Bloomfield, "is a change in the habits of performing sound-producing movements. Strictly speaking, a change of this kind has no importance so long as it does not affect

25. Martinet, Andre, *Manual of Phonetics* (Phonetics & Linguistic Evolution), North-Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1957, p. 254.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

27. Martinet, Andre, A *Functional View of Language*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, pp. 134-135.

the phonemic system of the language."[28] Phonetic changes may arise either due to external causes such as those arising from contact with other languages or from internal causes, e.g. a lack of balance in the phonological structure of the language. Martinet says:

> At least some of the causes may be in what we might call a lack of balance in the system. It is an acknowledged fact that a good many and probably most sound-changes seem to be due to an insufficient effort on the part of the speakers to distinguish carefully between neighbouring sounds. In many languages we see that....a stop will lose its plosive character and become a spirant.[29]

13. Phonetic changes due to external causes are principally the result of taking over of foreign sounds with borrowed words, Sapir says:

> It seems very probable that the psychological attitude of the borrowing language itself towards linguistic material has much to do with its receptivity to foreign words.[30]...The study of how a language reacts to the presence of foreign words—rejecting them, translating them or freely accepting them—may throw much valuable light on its innate formal tendencies.[31]

Languages have been classified in this regard as "borrowing languages" and "non-borrowing languages". English is a notorious example of the former, while Tamil is a typical example of non-borrowing languages where speakers show a strong tendency to resist borrowings and in particular to resist tampering with its phonological structure.

28. Bloomfield, Leonard, *Language*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1933, p. 369.

29. Martinet, A., *Phonology as functional phonetics*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1955, p. 22.

30. Sapir, Edward, *Language*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1921, p. 208.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

14. The internal causes which may lead to phonetic changes may be broadly classified into three categories, (i) phonetic closeness between any two phonemes in a language; (ii) phonemic sequences including consonant or vowel clusters; (iii) prosodic features like stress which are distinctive in a language.

15. Let us consider now some of the phonetic 'laws' which were once the preoccupation of linguists. Under Grimm's law,[32] which gave expression to the correspondences between Germanic and other Indo-European languages,

(a) unvoiced *stops* of the other languages are paralleled in Germanic by unvoiced *spirants*:

e.g. Latin *pater* English *father*

(b) *voiced* stops of the other languages are paralleled in Germanic by unvoiced *stops*

e.g. Latin *duō* English *two*

Another common type of change is the weakening of consonants between vowels. This is exemplified in Verner's law, according to which in pre-Germanic, *unvoiced spirant* (f, s) in intervocalic position was weakened to voiced spirant (v, z). This is not of course always the case: "enough languages keep unvoiced spirants intact between vowels, while others change them to voiced"[33] Let us take again the 'Great Vowel-Shift' in English. Bloomfield says:

> The English sound changes that are known under the name of "the great vowel shift" are of a type that has little effect beyond altering the acoustic shape of each phoneme; the long vowels were progressively shifted upward and into diphthongal types.

Middle English	*Early modern*	*Present-day*
['na:me]	[ne:me]	[nejm] name[34]

32. Bloomfield, Leonard, *Ibid.*, p. 348.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 375.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

It will thus be seen that the changes described in the well known phonetic laws like Grimm's law, etc...., are mostly shifts in a single phonic feature, like voiced to voiceless, stop to spirant, etc. and are illustrative of changes due to phonetic closeness.

16. Weakening of consonants between vowels (Verner's law) is a good example of phonetic change due to influence of neighbouring phonemes.. As Martinet says:

> Every phoneme has to adapt its articulation to that of the phoneme which it follows in speech.[35]

Consonant clusters are another frequent source of sound change. Bloomfield says:

> The general direction of a great deal of sound-change is towards a simplification of the movements which make up the utterance of any given linguistic form.[36]

For instance,

*K*nee — the first consonant is dropped in actual speech because the simultaneous articulation of k and n is not possible without the interpolation of an ever so slight a vocalic glide between the two.

talk — l is similarly lost.

Husband — s is pronounced as z, due to assimilation with voiced b.

In languages where vowel clusters are permitted, assimilation between successive vowels takes place; these are called *umlaut* in Germanic languages.[37]

17. Amongst prosodic features of a language, stress is a source of phonetic change. Bloomfield points out that "languages with strong word-stress often weaken or lose their unstressed vowels."[38] Sturtevant points out that "although the word "heaven" is nor-

35. Martinet, A., *Manuel of Phonetics* (Phonetics and linguistic evolution).
36. Bloomfield, *Ibid.,* p. 370.
37. *Ibid.,* p. 381.
38. *Ibid.,* p. 382.

mally a dissyllable a reduction of the stress of n until the total intensity of that sound falls below the intensity of v converts the word into a monosyllable. Since an increase of stress on a given syllable usually induces a diminution, of stress on neighbouring syllables, a strong stress-accent tends to suppress unaccented syllables, whose most sonorous sound is a consonant. The weakened consonant may attach itself to the accented syllable, as in the case of "heav'n".[39]

18. In Chinese and other 'tone' language mere differences in pitch indicate different words with different meanings.

Thus the Cantonese words

\sœng (hurt), /sœng (photograph), ¯sœng (prime minister), ˎsœng (pair of drawers), ˏsœng (ascend), _sœng (above) differ from each other by minimal distinction.[40]

(The diacritical marks represent differences in pitch). Any carelessness or slipshodness on the part of the speaker in articulating these differences in actual speech will lead to confusion but the fact that these pitch distinctions are of prime importance in Chinese indicates that the mere necessity to make oneself understood enables speakers to make these distinctions by long practice.

19. It would thus appear that the different types of phonetic change referred to above are all due to causes which are either preventible or whose effectiveness can be counteracted by a determined speech community. Be that as it may, none of these causes apply to a language like Tamil whose phonological structure had obviously been deliberately designed to prevent such causes operating. I am of course referring here to Standard Tamil, which is a spoken dialect based on written Tamil and which is spoken by all literates in Tamil; between this standard Tamil and the written Tamil there is a one to one correspondence, except in the case of two or three minor variations which I shall refer to later. The earliest extant Tamil work is a descriptive grammar named Tolkappiyam, whose date has not been definitely fixed yet but there is no doubt that on internal linguistic evidence alone it should

39. Sturtevant, E. H., *Ibid.*, p. 58.

40. Jones, Daniel, *The Phoneme; its nature and use*, W. Hepper & Sons, Ltd., Cambridge, 1962, p. 16.

be dated much earlier than what are usually designated as Sangam classics ascribed to 2nd Century B.C. to 2nd Century A.D. Referring to the accurate description of Tamil phonemes in this grammar, Sankaran says:

> Such an emphasis on the pattern inherent in the sounds of the language of study, and the attempt to establish, on the basis of their occurrance and distribution, the types of sounds which must have been significant in distinguishing the meaning of words is not met with even in the Astadyayi of Panini.[41]

> We are lost in wonder that in this Old Tamil Grammar, we rediscover, as it were, many of our own modern ideas. The conviction is gained more and more that it is worth the while to subject Tolkappiyam to a detailed scrutiny exploiting this beautiful work from the rigorous view-point of modern phonemics.[42]

Between the phonological structure of Tamil as described in Tolkappiyam and that of the Standard Tamil of today there is for all practical purposes little difference, with the result that, allowing for the lexical and to a small extent the grammatical changes which have meantime occurred, the present day Tamil literate has little difficulty in reading this grammar or the vast literature which has since accumulated and been preserved during the past two millennia.

20. Taking first the external cause of phonetic change, viz borrowing, Tamil is one of the few languages in the world which have resisted borrowing from other languages and, even in the small proportion of cases where they have borrowed, the words borrowed have been completely readapted to conform to the phonological structure of the language. In recent decades, due principally to the dominance of pro-Sanskrit groups in the educational and other spheres, a more or less artificial attempt to introduce the Sanskrit sounds h, s, sh (as in shun), j (as in join) into Tamil has been made but with the gradual diminution of the influence of this pro-Sanskrit group, the chances of these Sanskrit

41. Sankaran, C. R., *Phonemics of Old Tamil,* Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, Poona, 1951, p. 2.
42. *Ibid.,* p. 58.

sounds permanently becoming separate phonemes (they are already now allophones of existing phonemes like k, c, etc.) are remote. Neither in writing nor in formal speech is it fashionable today to use these Sanskrit sounds. For all practical purposes therefore, Standard Tamil today is phonetically and phonemically identical with the Standard Tamil as described in the earliest extant Tamil grammar of more than two thousand years ago, in spite of the contact influences of many languages which enjoyed meantime considerable prestige and dominance in the Tamil country at different periods viz. Sanskrit, Marathi, Telugu and English.

21. Taking the internal causes of phonetic change, voice vs. voicelessness, aspiration vs. lack of aspiration, stop vs. spirant are not distinctive oppositions in Tamil.

e.g. Tamil *K*appal (ship) is pronounced as *K*appal
„ Pak*k*am (page) is pronounced as pak*kh*am
„ Pang*k*am (harm) is pronounced as pang*g*am
„ vel*k*a (may you win) is pronounced as vel*h*a

Thus the type of phonetic changes which come under Verner's and Grimm's laws will not arise in the case of Tamil, whose stops have as allophones the corresponding voiceless aspirated, voiced and spirant phones occurring respectively after stops, nasals and semivowels or liquids respectively. The voiceless unaspirated stop occurs only at the beginning of a word.

22. Tamil has no stress or tone as distinctive features and consequently the phonetic changes occurring in other languages which have stress or tone as distinctive features do not occur in the case of Tamil.

23. Tamil observes very strict rules regarding consonant clusters. Such clusters do not occur in words either initially or finally; so the weakening or loss of one of such consonants does not arise in Tamil. Even medially consonant clusters can occur only in the following cases:

(i) as geminates (the r sound and the peculiar ṛ coloured retroflex Tamil sound 'ழ' are exceptions as they cannot be doubled).

(ii) a nasal may be followed by the homorganic stop which then has a voiced allophone.

(iii) a retroflex stop may be followed by a nonretroflex one but not vice versa. (The phonetic significance of this is presumably that it is easier for the articulatory muscles to switch from the abnormal to normal positions than vice versa. This needs further investigation).

(iv) a retroflex nasal may be followed by a nonretroflex stop which then assumes its voiced allophone.

(v) a semivowel or liquid may be followed by a nonretroflex stop (which assumes its spirant allophone) or by a nonretroflex nasal.

(vi) the only cases where a three consonant cluster are allowed are where the cluster initial is the semivowel y or v followed by a nonretroflex cluster.

Vowel clusters are not permitted in Tamil. If a word final is a vowel as also the following word initial, then the semi vowel *y* or *v* is interposed to conform to this rule.

24. Except for the two diphthongs *ai* and *au,* the vowels in Tamil are simple vowels, five short and five long. The short vowels should be pronounced distinctly short and the long distinctly long, at least twice as long according to the rules of Tolkappiyam. The long vowels differ both in quality, and in length from the short vowels. Speakers of Tamil have no difficulty whatever in distinguishing between the different vowel sounds and there is little or no scope in Tamil for changes of the type of the Great Vowel Shift to occur.

25. In the case of consonants too, since voice, aspiration and spirant are not distinctive features but are merely productive of contextual allophones, Tamil speakers do not normally find any difficulty in pronouncing them with distinctness. There have been some minor phonetic changes which however do not basically alter the phonemic structure of the language. They are:

(i) The dental 'n' is often mispronounced as front palatal retroflex 'n' when it occurs as word initial, although it is pronounced correctly when it occurs medially; it does not occur as word final.

The reason probably is the palatal retroflex 'n' does not occur as word initial and hence the substitution of retroflex 'n' for dental 'n' causes no confusion. This does not involve however any change in the phonemic structure.

(ii) Front palatal retroflex 't' is in many dialects pronounced with an intrusive 'r' coloured sound in certain but not all contexts but this is not the case in Jaffna (Ceylon) dialect. The reason for this appears to be that the allophone representing the intervocalic spirantization of the retroflex 't' is used in other contexts also.

Both these minor changes may in due course be rectified by using the correct pronunciations in schools, broadcasting etc., but even if they are not so corrected, they do not materially interfere with the correspondences between the spoken and written systems of the language.

26. One other factor which has also perhaps materially contributed to the stability of the phonemic structure of Tamil is the continued prestige and popularity of numerous works of Tamil Literature right from the Sangam classics of two thousand years ago to the voluminous Tamil publications of today in a variety of fields, which are all written in the same Standard Tamil whose spoken counterpart has an unchanging phonological structure.

27. It is clear that at some distant time in the past before Tolkappiam was itself written, the Scholars who helped in standardising the Tamil language, in defining its phonemes with a one to one correspondence between the spoken and the written systems and in describing its phonological structure, must have been aware, intuitively if not by conscious theorizing, of the factors which affect the phonological structure of a language; without such knowledge they could not have devised such a symmetrical, harmonious and pragmatically efficient system which has stood the test of time for over 2000 years.

28. What has been achieved by Tamil by way of phonemic stability all through a period of 2000 years without the advantages of modern mass media and against great odds (for instance, during nearly two centuries of British rule in India, Tamil was largely neglected and English was spoken even at home amongst the elite in Tamil country) should not be difficult of achievement for other

languages of today, with all the facilities which mass media of communication and increasingly universal literacy provide. But this is possible only with a realization that language is a social organization and like all social organizations, which are the creation of collective social will, purposeful control is at all times necessary if the objectives of the organization are to be adequately achieved. Otherwise depending on the degree of laxity allowed in each case, the organization is apt to drift as a result of influences extraneous to its purposes. It would be suicidal to dismiss such drift as an inherent, pre-destined and irremediable defect of the organization itself instead of recognising it as arising out of remissness on the part of those who control it. In other words a judicious combination of discipline and freedom appear to be as necessary in the case of language as in any other social organization created by man. The responsibility of linguists is great in this regard, as they alone have the opportunity and the expertise to tackle it successfully.

Aryan influence in Tamilaham during the Sangam Epoch

K. K. PILLAY

There is a considerable measure of uncertainty regarding the date of the Āryan advent into Tamiḻaham. None of the Śaṅgam works make specific when the Āryans entered Tamiḻaham. Certain writers have held, that, not long after the Vēdic period, there occurred a mass migration of Āryans to the Deccan, South India including Tamil Nad and still farther eastwards into the different countries of South-east Asia. Another facile generalisation advanced regarding the migration of the Āryans is that round about 1000 B.C. they moved southwards reaching even the Tamil country. But this is hardly justified by the known data

There is a tradition recorded in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa that Viswāmitra condemned his fifty sons to live in the southern borders of Āryavarta. These sons of Viswāmitra are supposed to have been descendants of Dasyus and it is believed that later on they became the ancestors of the Andhras, Pundras, Sabaras and Pulindas.[1] Assuming that the Brāhmanas might be dated to about 1000 B.C., it is to be remembered that there is no mention of the Tamils in this list.

Certain writers like the late P. T. Sriṇivasa Iyengar were inclined to treat a reference to Chērapādah occurring in Taittiriya Āranyaka as a reference to the Chēra kings of the South. But Ṣayana, the commentator of this Āraṇyaka, has interpreted Chēra to mean snake in that context. The known history of the Chēra kingdom does not warrant such an early antiquity for it. Nor are the references occurring in the epics of the Mahābhārata and the

1. Aitareya Brahmana, VII, 18.

Rāmāyaṇa to Tamil Nad reliable indications of very early Āryan contact.

In fact, it has to be observed that Pāṇini who is believed to have lived about the sixth century B.C. does not mention the kingdoms in the extreme south. He mentions only the Kalingas among the people of South India. Apparently, by his time the Āryans had little knowledge of the other kingdoms farther south. On the other hand, Kātyāyana, the grammarian of the 4th century B.C., specifies the Chōḷa kingdom. This is, to the best of our knowledge, the earliest reference to the extreme south.[2] It is not too much to presume that it was only round about the 4th century B.C. that the Āryan contact with the Tamil country could have begun. It is significant to remember in this connection that Manu, who wrote sometime between the 2nd century B.C., and 2nd century A.D., considered the Vindhyas as making the southern limit of Āryavarta and the land to the south as a condemned region.[3]

The question arises as to who came first to the Tamil country, the Hindus, Jains or Buddhists. The common view held is that the Hindus were the earliest colonists. But a re-examination of the question suggests that the other possibility is equally worthy of consideration. In the first place, Vijaya, the first king according to the Ceylonese Chronicles and the accredited leader of the Āryan immigrants into Ceylon, is assignable to the 5th century B.C., though tradition makes him a contemporary of the Buddha. It stands to reason that the Buddhists would have come to Ceylon not much earlier than the time when they migrated to South India. Whether the Āryans went to Ceylon entirely by the sea route or by land to South India first and thence moved on to Ceylon, the Buddhists who were imbued by the missionary zeal

2. Katyayana himself is believed to have been a brahmin of South India.

3. The early Aryans are said to have held the Vindhya as making the limit of travelling, for the region to the South of the Vindhyas was known as 'Pariyatra'. It is also said that the Aryans came to identify the South with death and called it Yamyadik or Yamadik i.e. that which points to the abode of death. Probably this was because the early immigrants were fiercely resisted by the original inhabitants.

would not have failed to come into contact with South India at the earliest opportunity. In any case, sometime between the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., Buddhists, and in all probability, the Jains, too, came to the Tamil country in South India.

This view is supported by the Brāhmī inscriptions of Madurai, Tirunelveli and Ceylon. There have appeared differences of views regarding the date of these inscriptions; some epigraphists assign them to the 3rd century B.C., and others to the second and first centuries B.C. Palaeography is the principal basis of these deductions; and it is well known that it is not far too dependable a source for determining chronology within a narrow range of time. The view of K. V. Subrahmania Aiyar that some of the inscriptions are assignable to the 3rd century B.C. seems to be still valid, though some of the recent epigraphists are inclined to date even the oldest among them to the 2nd century B.C. However, generally speaking, the Brāhmī inscriptions of South India also support the suggestion that from about 4th century B.C., the Jains and Buddhists had begun to come and settle down in Southern India, and that in all probability they preceded the Hindu Āryans.

It is important to remember that the Hindu Āryans did not at all migrate to South India at one stretch. The epigraphic evidence as well as the names of groups of brahmins who were settled at different stages in different places prove this. The designations of groups like, 'Nārpetthennāyiravar' and 'Eḻunūṟṟuvar' clearly suggest that waves of immigrants came into the Tamil country. Perhaps the village Eṇṇāyiram which literally translates the Sanskrit word *ashṭasahasram* (eight thousand) may be one of the places where the community had settled. It is interesting to observe that now the name survives in a large group of Smārta Brāhmins in the Tamil country. The section of brahmins in the country known as Vadamas obviously consists of those who came from the north; they claim themselves to be pure in descent from the Āryans. Some of the Śaṅgam poets had names like 'Vadamōdankiḻār', 'Vaḍama Vaṇṇakkan Dāmōdaranār' and 'Vaḍaman Vaṇṇakkam Pērisāttan'; these indicate that these poets belonged to groups which had hailed from the north.

There is no doubt that a considerable number of Āryans, particularly of the Brahmin caste, had come into the Tamil

country some centuries prior to the Śaṅgam age, which is believed to have ranged roughly between the 1st and 3rd centuries A.D. The question arises as to whether brahmins alone among the Āryans migrated to the South. Though brahmins were the leaders of the immigrants, there is a great probability that others also accompanied them from the north. The Kshatriyas, as warriors, the Vaisyas as traders and businessmen, as well as the Śūdras would have joined them. Ahanānūru (279) shows that Āryans were engaged in taming elephants. It is interesting to learn[4] that elephants themselves were taught and trained through the medium of the Āryan language. Moreover, mention is made to the Āryan dancers of the Kazhaikkuṭṭam dance accompanied by drums and rope dancers.[5] All these indicate that there were Āryan Sūdras, too, in the Tamil country of the Sangam age.

A more intriguing question is whether all the brahmins of Tamilaham during the Śaṅgam epoch were immigrants from the north. Did the Āryan brahmins keep themselves aloof from the higher sections of the indigenous country in the south or did they absorb some of them into their fold? We find certain pieces of evidence pertaining to the Śaṅgam epoch and the succeeding ages which suggest that there was an amalgamation.

In this connection, it is well worth noticing the occurrence of terms like 'Mēlōr' 'Uyarndōr' and 'Aṛivar' which occur in Tolkāppiyam, the celebrated grammar. The term 'Mēlōr' seems to have specified all persons of high character. From Karpiyal 3, Tolkāppiyam, it would appear that it included the first three classes under this designation. There is a slight difference in the denotation of the term as interpreted by the commentators of Tolkāppiyam. Iḷampūranar interpreted 'Mēlōr' as the devas or celestial beings. Nachinārkkiniyar provides a very wide interpretation to the term. He states that the norms of conduct prescribed for Vaṇigar or traders in respect of earning wealth is applicable to brahmins (antaṇar), arasar (kings) and all those comprised under Vēḷaḷar. According to him, therefore, 'Mēlōr' denoted those members who followed a high standard of conduct. If that were

4. Mullaippattu 31-37 ; Mālaipadukadam 326-27.
5. Kurundogai 7: 3-5.

so, it is a notably democratic conception. References in Tolkāppiyam (Tol. Karpiyal 3) and Puranānūru (183) show that 'Mēlōr' or men of character could be members of the three higher castes.

Equally wide was the denotation of the term 'Uyarndōr'. Ilampūranar, the commentator of Tōlkāppiyam, takes in respect of Sutra No. 27 Uyarndōr to mean Antaṇar and Araśar. But, while commenting on the two succeeding sutras he takes Uyarndōr to mean brahmins as well as traders. Pērāśiriyar, another commentator holds the term Uyarñdor to include brahmins as well as other learned persons. Thus 'Uyarñdor' seems to have denoted persons of deep learning and high character. Apparently, in a general sense it comprehended holy men, kings, heroes and brahmins. Used in a specific sense, it denoted also worthy individuals in the three higher groups of the social strata.

As regards the 'Aṛivar' the interpretations suggested are illuminating. Tolkāppiyar does not identify Pārppār (brahmins) exclusively with Aṛivar. Pērāsiriyar states that 'Aṛivar' are persons gifted with deep foresight and in this respect he likens them to brahmins, but does not speak of them in identical terms. It is only Divākaram which equates the term with 'Pārppār'; but the basis for this interpretation is not clear. Thus Aṛivar in the original sense, used by Tolkāppiyar, applied to learned men among the people. No exclusive reference to caste or community is implied by the term. This suggests that a certain measure of fluidity existed in the caste system in respect of the Arivar. Perhaps some of the learned Tamils of the indigenous stock were absorbed into the fold of brahmins. One instance pertaining to the 4th century A.D. is known to us, when for the purpose of conducting sacrifices, certain members of the non-brahmin communities were selected for want of the required number of brahmins. In one of the accounts concerning brahmins, it is stated that during the time of Mayuravarman of the Kadamba dynasty, some Āndhra brahmins selected a number of families from the non-brahmin castes, converted them into brahmins and chose exogamous sect names for them.[6] The fact that some brahmins were described as belonging to the 'Vadama' and 'Brihacharanam' shows

6. Thurston: Castes and Tribes of Southern India—Introduction pp. 45-46.

that others were indigenous. In this connections it is relevant to consider the genesis of the people in Tamil Nad known variously as 'Ādi Śaivas' or 'Śivāchāryas' or still later as 'Otuvār'. In respect of customs and manners they imitate the brahmins. Some of them wear the sacred thread. They have been the officiating priests in the Śaiva temples, while quite a few of them continue to be priests in the shrines like those of Kāḷi, Amman and Madan, which are all of pre-Aryan origin. It is probable that some non-brahmins had become merged with brahmins. On the other hand, brahmins who continue as priests in Śiva temples are considered as inferior to other brahmins. Does this imply that the Śiva deity was of non-Āryan origin? In any case these trends suggest that there was a certain measure of fusion among the Āryan and non-Āryan priestly class.

Not only that. In the early periods of the immigration of the Āryans it would seem that the caste system was not very rigid. At any rate, instances of brahmins having married from other communities are mentioned. Rāvana, Vāli, Sugrīva, Māricha, Subāhu, Khara and others are stated to have been children of non-Āryan mothers born of Āryan fathers. Whether or not they were all historical personages or whether all the incidents associated with them are true or not, the traditions regarding their origin suggest that such marriages were not uncommon in the early stages.

It was no doubt in the sphere of religion that the Āryan ideas and practices seem to have entered prominently the new set-up in Tamiḷaham. The Āryan brahmins must have been imbued by a certain measure of missionary zeal in their migration to the south, and consequently they were eager to introduce their religious ideas and institutions among the people of their new settlements. They appear to have first worked up their way to royal favour; and, even during the Śaṅgam epoch, several ministers and poets belonged to the Brahmin caste. They were held in high esteem by kings and chieftains. Verses in Purananuru and Padiṟṟuppattu state that it was incumbent even on kings to bow down to brahmins in respect. This high position accorded to them paved the way for their ascendancy and widespread influence among the people of Tamil Nad as in the rest of South India.

Brahmins in the royal courts induced their patrons to perform yāgas or holy sacrifices. Paṭṭinappālai, Padiṟṟuppattū and Kalittogai, for instance, refer to great yāgas which were conducted on a large scale. The names of kings like 'Palyāga Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷuti' and 'Irāyasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunarkiḷḷi' provide testimony to the enthusiasm of kings in the performances of sacred sacrifices.

Bestowing gifts on brahmins was held to be a meritorious act of beneficence. Tolkāppiyar had declared that giving gifts to brahmins was akin to the performance of sacrifices.

The vēdic lore got currency even during the Śaṅgam epoch. The Vēdas were described in Tamil as 'Maṛai' 'Kēḷvi', 'Vāi Moḻi', 'Mudu Moḻi' and Yeḻudākkarpu'. 'Andaṉāḷar Nānmaṛai' and Arumaṛai' were other honorific designations of the Vedas. Specific details regarding the sacrifices like the kinds of posts to be erected on occasions of the Yāgas, the special dress to be worn by the persons engaged in performing the rituals and ceremonies connected with the sacrifices[7] are indicated in the Śangam works. The Paripāḍal states that Vishṇu emerges from the sacrificial fire.

It is significant that the deities figuring prominently in the Vēdas find a more or less equal position in the Śaṅgam works as well. Indra, for instance, is the lord of the celestial gods. In the Śaṅgam age, festivals in honour of Indra were held in the affluent towns and villages.[8] The sacred Mount Meru of the North finds its echo in the Śaṅgam classics.[9] Tolkāppiyam and Paripāḍal accord the primary place to Vishnu. All the other gods, Asuras, the Sun and the Moon as well as the natural elements and the five Bhūtas are all believed to have emerged from Vishṇu. The four-faced Brahma who is entrusted with the creation of the world appears from the navel of Vishṇu.[10] Kāma and Sōma are also like Brahmā, the sons of Vishṇu. Garuḍa is the vehicle as well as the banner of Lord Vishṇu while Ādiśēsha, the serpent god, serves as his couch.[11] The various incarnations of Vishṇu are mentioned in the Śaṅgam classics.

7. Purananuṛu 15 and 166.
8. Ainkuṛunuṛu 62:1.
9. Perumpanaṛṛuppadai 429 and Paripadal 9:13.
10. Kalittogai 2:1.
11. Perumpanarruppadai: 371-373.

Muruga is the nephew of Vishṇu and the son of Śiva and Pārvati. He is the god of Kurinchi and is held in great veneration, particularly by the Kuravas. Besides undoubtedly the Tirumurugāṟṟuppadai and Paripāḍal, other classics like Puṟanānūṟu,[12] Naṟṟiṇai,[13] and Kuṟuntogai[14] refer to Muruga. Indra is said to appoint Muruga as the general of the Dēvās in encountering the opposition of the Aśuras headed by Śūran. Muruga's exploits and ultimate triumph over Śūra are described. Among the places sacred to Muruga. Tirupparankunram and Tiruchilavāi find special mention.

Whether Muruga was an indigenous deity of the Tamils or not has been a subject of controversy. Skanda, Subrahmaṇia and Kārtikeya are names of the same diety occurring, in the holy books of the Āryas.[15] But there is no place for this deity in the Vēdas. Every thing considered, there is a great probability that Muruga was a popular deity of the Dravidian Tamils and was absorbed into the pantheon by the Āryas. There is also justification to hold that Śiva, the 'Mukkatchelvan' of Puranānūru also comes under the same category.

Apart from this, there were several deities of the early Tamils who were not eclipsed. They continued to be worshipped alongside with the Āryan deities; frequently they were assimilated into the existing fold. Thus Koṟṟavai, mentioned for instance in Ahanānūru (345:4), as 'Kan Amar Chelvi and in Kalittogai (89:8) as Perunkāṭṭukoṟṟi gets identified with Pārvati as the consort of Śiva. She, too, has three eyes and the trident. The attributes associated with Koṟṟavai are distinctly of the indigenous pattern; and like Śiva and Muruga, she must have been absorbed in the later Hindu pantheon.

Besides, a huge host of other deities was known to the Tamils long before their contact with the Āryans. In respect of most of

12. Puṟanānūṟu 55:19.
13. Naṟṟinai; 288:10.
14. Kuṟuntogai 1:3.
15. In the Taittiriya Aranya, among the Gayatri mantras of many deities, Shanmukha is mentioned. In the Chhandogya Upanishad Sanatkumara, a great teacher of liberation, is identified with Skanda.

these deities there was a common belief that, if they were not worshipped, harm would befall the people. Some deities were supposed to reside in hills and trees as well as in rivers and tanks. Demons and demonesses were particularly believed to live in these places.

The practice of erecting hero-stones and worshipping them was common among the Tamils of old. Images of gods and goddesses were erected in the junctions of lanes and streets. Further, in the common meeting place, called the Podiyil, they used to erect a piece of wood and worship it;[16] on the walls of Podiyil they maintained painted images of dieties. All these are indications that there was a curious blending of the Āryan and non-Āryan practices in religion. But it must be remembered that the fusion did not permeate the entire Tamil Society in a uniform manner. The Aryan pattern, with but a few accretions, remained with the brahmins and the higher sections of the non-brahmins, while the people in the lower rungs stuck mainly to the older indigenous ways, absorbing occasionally the new practices. Festivals were celebrated in honour of the Aryan deities as well as for the rest. There were, for, instance, the 'Indra Viḷā', Kārtikai Viḷa', 'Ōṇa Viḷā' and numerous other festivities connected with the smaller village gods.

In respect of social life, too, a certain measure of absorption of the northern customs and habits was found. It has been frequently discussed how far the Āryan institution of caste based on Varṇa or colour had penetrated Tamiḷaham of the Śaṅgam Age. Clearly the distinction based on Varṇa had appeared. The Tolkāppiyam and Puranānūṛu speak of the four-fold divisions. But, two considerations differentiate the Tamiḷaham pattern from the corresponding social structure in the north. In the first place, there is little evidence of the Kshatriya caste as such in Tamiḷaham; the Chēra, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya kings not to speak of the numerous chieftains were really Sūdras. Secondly, there existed numerous subdivisions like Pāṇan, Tuḍiyan, Paṛayan, Pulayan, Mallan, Kūttan and Kaḍamban among the Sūdras, purely based on occupation. It would seem therefore, that in respect of the caste system, too, there was fusion of the Āryan and non-Āryan

16. Paṭṭinappālai 246-49.

systems. Prior to the advent of the Āryans, there could have emerged a social division based on occupation, which, in its turn, was determined by the topographical divisions like the Kurinchi, Mullai, Marudam, Neydal and Pālai.

The brahmins had begun to live as an exclusive group. They lived in separate streets. Kuṛuntogai[17] and Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai,[18] for instance, speak of the streets where brahmins alone lived. Siṛupānāṟṟuppaḍai[19] refers to an essentially brahmin village 'Āmūr' in Oymānāḍu. They kept their streets and houses clean. They bathed early in the morning and offered worship. But there were some who took to occupations other than religious. References to these Vēḷāppāppār', otherwise spoken of as 'Ūrppāppār' and to those who earned their living by cutting conch shells are found.[20] From Padiṟṟuppattu[21] it is learnt that some brahmins had become skilled artisans, capable of making fine ornaments. The commentator of Padiṟṟuppattu points out that the able craftsman mentioned in the verse was also well-versed in the art of conducting the Yajna. This indicates that a certain measure of fluidity in the choice of occupations existed.

There is little doubt that the Āryan brahmins commanded high respect and social influence in Tamiḻaham even in the Śaṅgam age.[22] This was by virtue of their influence in the royal courts, their association with temples and worship and also their lofty ideals of conduct. It was essentially on account of the royal patronage that they were ensured special protection during occasions of political hostilities.

Though they were in several respects a privileged people, the Āryan brahmins and other immigrants borrowed several customs of the Dravidians, among which may be mentioned the institution of tali tying which symbolised marriage, the boring of the nose and presenting to the bride the new sari called 'Kurai' by the bridegroom's party before marriage. There was, therefore, a cer-

17. Kuṛuntogai 277.
18. Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai, 30.
19. Siṛupānāṟṟuppaḍai, 187-88.
20. Ahananuṛu 24 1-3.
21. Padiṟṟuppattu 74; 10 to 14.
22. Padiṟṟuppattu 24; 6 to 8.

tain measure of admixture in the religious and social set up. But it would by no means be easy to determine the exact proportion of the Āryan and non-Āryan elements in the admixture.

The consideration of the Āryan influence in respect of language is interesting. Brahmins took to Tamil, the native language, alongside with Sanskrit. The result was the entry of Sanskrit words into the parlance and vocabulary of the Tamil language. In respect of the earliest Śaṅgam poems the influence of Sanskrit was negligible. But there appeared a gradual increase; in the compositions known as the Padinenkīḻkanakku the proportion of Sanskrit words became conspicuous.

It is, however, remarkable that several brahmins became Tamil poets; some like Paranar and Kapilar were the most outstanding among them. Certain scholars have estimated that the brahmin poets constituted about one-tenth of the total number of Tamil poets of the Śaṅgam epoch. Perhaps, the percentage was higher, for, in several cases the caste to which the poet belonged is difficult to be ascertained, However it is interesting to find that the brahmin poets of Tamil took to the language with remarkable enthusiasm. How they relished the indigenous language and its beauties is gathered, for instance, from the fact that Kuṟinjippāṭṭu' was composed by the brahmin poet, Kapilar, in order to reveal the sweet charm of Tamil to the Āryan king Brihadatta.

By way of conclusion it may be stated that the Tamils of the Pre-Āryan age had their own pattern of religious and social institutions, language and literature. But to assert that the pre-Āryan Tamils had 'a rather primitive and poorish culture,[23] is an understatement. Bishop Caldwell, who wrote at a time when all the Śaṅgam classics had not been brought to light, states that 'the Dravidians, properly so called, had acquired at least the elements of civilisation, prior to the arrival amongst them of the brahmins'.[24] The Śaṅgam classics have not only strengthened the force of his observation but have shown that the Tamils of the age had developed their own peculiar civilisation in a remarkable measure.

23. The Culture and History of the Tamils, by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, p. 7.
24. Bishop Caldwell: Dravidian Comparative Grammar (1956), p. 113.

Classical Dance of the Ancient Tamils

NIRMALA RAMACHANDRAN

From a critical study of the dances and music mentioned in the Silappadikaram, it is clear that the ancient Tamils had developed a very high standard of technique in dance and music, which probably formed the basis for the Aryans to develop and write a highly systematised and perfect technique on the art of dancing and dramaturgy like Bharata's 'Natya Sastra' and Nandikeswara's 'Abhinaya Darpana'.

Date of Natya Sastra:

The Natya Sastra is the most important and authoritative treatise on Sanskrit dramaturgy dealing exhaustively on poetics, metre, music and drama as they affect the composition and representation of the drama. Nandikeswara's 'Abhinaya Darpana' on the other hand, deals exhaustively on the art of Bharata Natyam only. Nothing definite can be said about the date of the Natya Sastra. It has been assigned by different scholars to various dates between the 2nd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D. In fact, the date of the Natya Sastra according to some, is placed in the 3rd century A.D. i.e., a 100 years after the date of Silappadikaram. 'The prakrits recognised by the Natya Sastra are later than those of Asvagosha. It recognises the use of the Ardha-Magadi which is not found in the dramas other than those of Asvagosha and Bhasa. On the other hand, it ignores the Maharashtri which it freely used in the later classical dramas. The fact that Bhasa violates some of the rules of Bharata suggests that in his days, the Natya Sastra had not obtained sufficient sanctity. All this

(We regret this article lacks diacritical marks—*Ed.*)

evidence goes to suggest the 3rd century A.D. as a probable date of this work.'[1]

Dance and Music in Silappadikaram:

Silappadikaram gives a fund of information about the music and dance of the ancient Tamils 2000 years back. While giving the necessary qualifications of the ideal dance master in 'Arangeru Kadai', Silappadikaram mentions that an ideal master must have thorough knowledge regarding the characteristics of the 2 broad divisions of Ahakkoothu and Purakkoothu. When conducting the 2 general varieties of dance Ahakkoothu and Purakkoothu that include the songs, the tales and their combinations, he should have an eye upon the movements with the single and double hands, beauty hands and expressive hands known as Pindi and Pinayal, Ezhirkai and Thozhirkai respectively. The Ahakkoothu and Purakkoothu referred by Ilango Adigal are only the Nritta and Nritya aspects of Bharatanatyam which are the 2 major aspects of this great art. Purakkoothu or Nritta is pure dance which consists of movements of the body and limbs which are performed to create beauty and decorative effect and not to convey any specific meaning or idea to the beholder. Ahakkoothu or Nritya on the other hand is dance with facial expressions i.e., a dance which performed specifically to convey the meaning of import of a theme or an idea to the beholder. This Nritya is accomplished through the use of suggestive facial expression and codified gestures of the hands. The Pindi and Pinayal mentioned here are the single handed gestures or Asamyuta Hastas and double handed gestures or Samyuta Hastas.

The Pindi or single handed gestures are 28 in number and they are:— Pataka, Tripataka, Ardha-Pataka, Kartari-Mukha, Mayura, Ardha-chandra, Arala, Sukatunda, Mushti, Sikjara, Kapittha, Kataka-Mukha, Suci, Chandra-kala, Padma-kosa, Sarpa–sirsa, Mrga–sirsha, Simha-Mukha, Kangula, Solo-padma, Chatura, Bhramara, Hamsasya, Hamsapakaha, Samdamsa, Mukula, Tamrachuda, Trisula. The Pinayal or double handed gestures which are 24 in

1. M. A. Mehendale, M.A., Ph.D., Chapter XVI. A. Sanskrit Language and Literature. '*The History and Culture of the Indian People*—Vol. II, page 270. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—Bombay, 1951.

number are Anjali Kapotha, Karkata, Swastika, Dolahasta, Pushpa puta, Utsanga, Sivalinga, Katakavardhana, Kartari-Swastika, Dolahasta, Pushpa puta, Utsanga, Sivalinga, Katakavardhana, Kartari-Swastika, Sakata, Sanku, Chakra, Samouta, Pasa, Kilaka, Matsya, Kurma, Veraha, Garula, Nagabanda, Khadva, Berunda, Avhittha.

Of these 28 and 24 hand gestures, only some are used while performing the pure dance or Purakkoothu. Such of those hand gestures that are used in pure dance as ornamental adjuncts are called 'Ezhirkai' (hand used to create beauty) and all those that are employed for expressing some idea or meaning are called 'Thozhirkai' as they serve the purpose of conveying an idea. Thus, while the 'Thozhirkai' are 28 plus 24 — 52 in number, used in the Nritya aspect of Bharatanatyam, 'Ezhirkai' are comparatively less in number i.e., 13 in number as they serve only as ornamental adjuncts.

The dance master should see that pure dance does not get mixed up with dance with expressions and vice versa, and he should not mix-up the foot movements of the Kuravaikkoothu with those of Varikkoothu.

On the other hand, a dancer had to undergo rigorous training for 7 years starting from her 5th year in music and dance. She was expected to be able to sing songs composed in Foreign languages as well as play on the yal, flute and drum. This compares well with the verse in the 'Abhinaya Darpana'.

'Kantena lambayeth geetham
Has-the nartham pradarsayeth
Chakshurbhyam darsayeth bhavam
Padabhyam talamachareth'.

The dancer must sing producing music from the throat, bring out the meaning of the song by appropriate gestures of the hand, her eyes must speak out the bhava or expression and feet must keep perfect time.

'Yatho hasthas tha tho drushtir
Yatho drushtis tha tho manaha
Yatho manas tha tho bhavo
Yatho bhavastha tho rasaha.'

Eyes should follow the hand, mind should follow the eye, where the mind goes there is expression and where there is bhava or expression, there is rasa.

The dance master must be able to choregraph harmoniously the various kinds of Purakkoothu with the 14 types of Vilakku or songs. Besides, he should have thorough mastery over the eleven types of dances from Alliyam to Kodu-kotti. These eleven types are:— Alliyam, Kodu-kotti, Kudai, Kudam, Pedi, Kadayam, Pandarangam, Mal, Tudi, Marakkal and Pavai. The dances referred to are that of Siva, Muruga, Kama, Durga, Krishna, Lakshmi and Indrani. While the Silappadikaram gives slight descriptions of the context and occasion for these dances, they do not throw much light as to how they were danced — the technique and manner of presentation.

Alliyam:— Sri Krishna and his brother Balarama, had to pass through many a peril when they were brought to Mathura, the capital of King Kamsa to be slain. One such was the royal elephant Kuvalayapeeda which was driven furiously on them. On that occasion, it is said that Krishna dances a wonderful dance when he pulled out the tusks of the maddened beast and struck it dead.

Kodu-kotti:— is ascribed to Lord Siva. The 3 invisible Asura brothers that ruled the 3 cities made of Gold, Silver and Iron could be slain only when they came together once in many thousands of years for a second and that too with a single arrow only. Only Lord Siva could undertake that mighty task. Slaying them and standing on the battle field where lay the ashes of the burnt cities, he danced a fierce dance of triumph and victory clapping his hands in glee while his consort Bhairavi was alone left to keep time to his weired measures known as Kodu-Kotti.

Kudai:— In the great battle between the Asuras and Devas, the Divine Boy, Skanda, the leader of the Divine Armies, lowered his great umbrella and using it as a side curtain danced a dance of disdain and merriment (Kudai-umbrella).

Kudam:— Usha, daughter of Bana, the Asura king of Shontapura fell in love with Anirudda, son of Kama and Grandson of

Sri Krishna. Bana on coming to know of it was enraged and put Anirudda in jail after a hard fight. Then, Sri Krishna who went in disguise to the city of Bana to see his grandson danced a strange dance with a pot in his hands (made of clay and five metals) that was always kept moving to keep time to his evolutions (Kudam-pot).

Pedi:— The dance of Kama along the streets of the City of Shontapuram to effect the release of his son held in captivity changing himself into a combination of man and woman (Pedi-Eunuch).

Kadayam:— was the dance danced by Indrani in the same city of doom. She is said to have danced the last of the dances (Kadai-last).

Pandarangam:— is also another dance of Lord Siva white with the ashes of the vast crematorium, on the battle field after the burning of the Tripura.

Mal:—The dance of Govinda disguised as a wrestler when he challenged and crushed Bana, the Asura in fair-fight. The evolutions during the bout are given the name of a dance, because it was so simple and merry a feat to the Lord.

Tudi:— The dance of victory of Lord Skanda keeping time on the Tudi on one hand, over Sura Padma, the mighty Asura who took refuge on top of the waves in mid-ocean.

Marakkal:— Mahadevi, sister of Vishnu was enraged when the Asuras took refuge by changing themselves into poisonous snakes and scorpions. The Devi, with legs of wood danced crushing the life out of the poisonous brood. (Marakkal—wooden leg).

Pavai:— Lakshmi assumed a wondrous form that melted the hearts of the Asuras and put chaos into their brains and made them run after her madly. The beautiful gait and charming movements of Lakshmi are known as Pavai.

These eleven dances with their appropriate songs and tales and the sentiments underlying each, should be part of the equipment of the teacher and the pupil in dance.

The mention of 2 types of Koothu have been interpreted in various ways as:

Santhikkoothu as against Vinodakkoothu
Kuravaikkoothu as against Varikkoothu
Vasaikkoothu as against Varisanthikkoothu
Tamil as against Aryan
Desi as against Margi.

From the standard works on music and dance used as references by Adiyarkunallar in his commentary on Silappadikaram, Shanthikkoothu may be taken to mean the classical dance or Bharatanatya and Vinodakkoothu the folk dances. As under Shanthikkoothu, mention is made of Chokkam or Pure Dance consisting of 108 Karanas. Mai which is divided into desi, Vadugu and Singala.

Abhinaya which is the interpretation of a song with facial expressions and Nataka which is dance with the dramatic element. Under the Vinodakkoothu comes the Kuravai in which 7, 8, or 9 persons take part. Love and conquest form the subject.

The songs are composed in the metre Kuravai.

Kalinatam:— Acrobatics of professional gymnasts and tumblers.

Kudam:— is a dance with waterpots on the head.

Nokku:— marked by stateliness, agility and seductiveness.

Tholpavai:— is the dance of the puppets or Tholubommalatham with figures out of leather with a lighted curtain as the back ground.

Vasai:— also called Vinodakkoothu related to sentiments of merriment and laughter admitting of 2 divisions — one before the kings — Vettiyal and the other before the common people — Poduviyal.

Silappadikaram gives the legendary origin of dancing. Once in the Sabha of Indra, Indra's son Jayantha is said to have lost his balance in his behaviour towards the celestial dancer Urvasi, which enraged Sage Agastya who cursed him to be born as a Bamboo stick in the Vindhya Hills and Urvasi a Courtesan on the earth. Urvasi was to be freed from the curse on being presented with the 'Talaikkol' which was symbolical of Jayantha, on

her Arangetral day. The talaikkol was usually the central shaft of a white umbrella captured in the battlefield from monarchs of great repute and symbolical of Jayantha. Thus Jayantha is celebrated in the ceremony and worship of 'Talaikkol'. This ancient ceremony of Talaikkol finds a parallel in the ceremony of 'Thandiam Pidithal' practised by the Devadasis of more recent times. The Devadasis as the name implies were professional temple dancers attached to the temples and they preserved the highest traditions of Bharatanatya in their original grandeur and pristine purity. The young daughters of the Devadasis started learning dancing at the age of five, first by watching the elder student dancers and practising by themselves. In about the 7th year when they were intiated for practice, the ceremony 'Thandiam Pidethal' (Holding the pole) is held. On an auspicious day and hour, a quantity of paddy is spread in the centre of the 'Silambakkoodam' in a square or rectangular form and a pole or stick is held across the centre by 2 elderly Devadasis firmly at both sides. The girl commencing her practice has to hold the middle of the stick with both her hands and begin to dance the first movements, with her feet over the paddy as the teacher beats the timing with his stick (Thattu-kazhi). The seed of Bharathanatyam is thus sown in her. Thus after 7 years of rigorous training in dancing the Arangetral or the first appearance on the stage is made.

The mention that Madavi danced both the Desi and Margi styles of dance may well mean the indigenous style developed by the ancient Tamils as against the alien style of the Aryans though essentially the technique of Bharatanatya was the same.

Thus, Silappadikaram gives ample evidence to a high state of evolution in the art of dancing. We also find that the instruments used by the ancient tamils were the yal, kuzhal and Maddalam. The qualifications of the songster, drummer, flutist and the vina player are also elaborately given. The detailed and technical description of the musical instruments and players clearly indicate that the ancient tamils had a highly developed musical system and used a scale of 22 srutis — that is the scale of just intonation.

Apart from the fund of information that we get about classical dancing and music in the Arangerukadai of Silappadikaram,

we also come across the various ritual and folk dances that were popular in those ancient days. The ancient Tamils believed in invoking the blessing of Gods during times of great distress and calamity and this they did by singing, dancing, fasting and feasting. The chief gods invoked by them were Murugan, Mayon, Siva, Korravai or the Goddess of Victory, Balarama, Varuna, Indra etc., among the ritual Dances, we come across Vettuvavari in honour of Korravai which was often performed by the Maravar tribe. The ritual dance Kuravaikoothu was performed by the women of the community in honour of Lord Krishna who married the Cowherdess Pinnai. The Kuravaikkoothu, we are told was performed by Madari and her daughter in order to invoke the blessing of Lord Krishna as a number of ill-omens indicated some disaster to the city and its people. So, in order to avert the impending danger, the Kuravaikkoothu was arranged.

In summing up the paper, the following are mentioned as worthy of note:

The ancient Tamils had developed a highly unique and original culture long before the beginning of the Christian era when literature and fine arts flourished. But, by the time of the Silappadikaram, that is the 2nd century A.D., Aryanisation had already started which had its effect in influencing all phases of life including the arts and literature. It is probable that soon after the early Aryans penetrated into the South, many Sanskrit or Prakrit words gained general currency. This was before the Christian era, and may have extended over a period of some centuries.[2] The influence of Aryan culture is clearly seen in the life described in the Silappadikaram. That is the reason why we find the introduction of a number of Aryan gods, and Sanskrit beliefs in the work. But, this need not lead one to believe that all fine arts were borrowed from the Aryans and that Sanskrit alone gave the key to the whole of Indian culture.

It may be assumed that the style of dancing and music developed by the ancient Tamils were studied and perfected by the

2. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, M.A., D.Litt.—Chapter XVI. B. Dravidian Languages and Literature—'*The History and culture of the Indian People*, Vol. II, page 288, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1951.

early Aryans, who wrote such great treatises like the 'Natya Sastra' and 'Abhinaya Darpana'.

It may also be argued that the very fact that only the Tamil country has been able to preserve through the ages the Bharata Natya in its original grandeur and pristine purity points to the fact that this was the dance that had been handed down by the age old ancestors of the present Tamils which later was perfected by the early Aryans. The Tamil country especially Tanjore, has always been the seat and centre of learning and culture. It was the famous quartet Chinnayya, Ponniah, Sivanandam and Vadivelu of the Tanjore Court during King Saraboji's time (1798-1824) who made a rich contribution to music and Bharatanatyam and also completed the process of re-editing the Bharatanatyam programme into its present shape with its various forms like the Alarippu, Jathiswaram, Sabdham, Varnam, Tillana, etc. The descendants of these 4 brothers formed the original stock of Nattuvanars or dance teachers of Bharatanatyam in Tanjore. Originally, they formed a community by themselves and most of them were Saivite non-brahmins, their mother tongue being Tamil. Probably they were the direct descendants of the ancient Tamils, who tried to preserve the age-old traditions of dance and music passed on by their ancestors.

Though Bharatanatyam is over 2000 years old, it has always been a growing art. Its basic principles and ideals have remained practically unchanged although its repertoire and forms of presentation have been changing from time to time to suit changing conditions and conceptions of artistry. Thus the art of India, especially music and dance are a revelation of many thousands of years of culture and civilisation.

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Apperception in Tamil Literary Studies

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

I

Definition of Terms

"Apperception" is not a very modern term in the psychology of Cognition or of Learning. It was first introduced by Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) to express the process of new ideas and experiences being received by the mind and their being immediately related to previous ideas and experiences. Herbart postulated the existence in the brain of "apperception masses" which fall upon new ideas and experiences and work them into new compounds. This term "Apperception", borrowed from Herbartian psychology, seems as convenient a term as any to express the perspective of literary experience that the study or the appreciation, or evaluation of literature confers, when literature, especially poetry, is considered in its passive aspect, namely, as the reaction created in the mind by the impact of a piece of literature, as read, studied, deciphered, and evaluated. Apperception, as meant here, may also be substituted by other terms like "assimilation" (William James) or by a term with closer literary affinities, namely, "contextualization", the planting of a mental literary reaction in its relation to previous experience.[1]

The passive and psychological aspects of literature vary with each individual. Individuals are not affected to an equal extent by the same plot, by the same characters, by the same metaphor, by the same simile, by the same word. To what then is due this

1. John Adams, The Herbartian Psychology applied to Education, D. C. Death and Company, London, n.d.

range and variety of literary experiences stimulated in different individuals by the same word or set of words? A range is possible because of one's mood at the time of reading the poem, by the weather outside, by happy or sorrowful memories which lurk in one's subconsciousness as a result of the events of yesterday or of the recent past. But these may be termed the incidental or accidental aspects or even determinants of the mental reaction to literature, since they do not affect, at least let us concede for argument, the *substantial* reaction on the mind. (Note distinction between 'tied' imagery and 'free' imagery.)

Individual Response and Anterior Preparation

The *substantial* reaction occurs in different individuals according to their previous knowledge and experience, and the extent of "awareness" at a particular point of time resulting in a response to a literary stimulus.[2]

A line like Bharathi's

Puhal̲ mantikkitakkum tamil̲ naatu

may evoke in different readers different response-reactions according as a person is historically aware and harks to the period of the Cholas and their artistic creations, or one is religiously aware and thinks of the achievements of the Saints like Seekilaar or one is militarily aware and thinks of army exploits, or is ethically aware and thinks of the *Tirukkural,* or is aware of a combination of these and other fields of achievement. A whole world of difference may exist in individual response, and will, therefore, depend to a large extent on the individual's total anterior preparation, both literary and psychological, for a particular poem or line.

So much for what may be termed popularly the association of ideas. But the strength of apperception depends also on the lexicological and the multi-disciplinary preparation of an individual, because the meaning of poetry is "contextual", and evokes the meaning of words related by similarity or contrast in sound, or sense or derivation, in all languages and in the disciplines that the individual knows. Again, for the study of literature a man's

2. See Alan R. White, *Attention,* Blackwell, Oxford, 1964.

total education and aesthetic sensitivity counts, and the teacher of literature must seek to build the total aesthetic personality of the individual, if evaluation is to rise to the level of the understanding of Art and Beauty. The poem as poem, consists in the texture and organisation of language, in the images it evokes, and in the capacity it has to satisfy the aesthetic sensitivity of a cultivated mind. These require in the individual himself a development of aesthetic potential.

Twentieth Century Criticism

Western literary criticism emphasises in this century the study of literature as literature, and keeps reporting that the response to the poem should be through explication and an analysis of poetic devices in terms of aesthetics. The response in the individual, according to present day critics should generally be not created because of social, historical, psychological or anthropological interest and perspective. The history of Western literary criticism has gradually led to this shift of emphasis and this climaxing in the study of the poem as a poem, is partly because of its having satisfactorily exhausted the study of literature from the angle of social history, of anthropology, of psychology. Yet in ultimate analysis what is the scope that explication and aesthetics offer outside of related background perspectives? What is it that makes a poem a poem or a novel a novel? If, as is advocated, a poem has a special ontological status and is "a system of norms of ideal concepts which are intersubjective", and that there is concerning a poem a "collective ideology" accessible only through "individual mental experiences based on the sound-structure of its sentences,"[3] the most vital factor in the definition the poem is the *mental experience of the individual.* Therefore, the task of literary education should be to develop the potential for the mental experience of the individual so that the total "collective ideology" improves, and evaluation is sufficiently objective, and exploits to the full the aesthetic possibilities of a work of art.

There are two approaches to a literary work of art which are possible, and which, no doubt, have to be utilised by Tamil literary

3. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature,* Penguin Books, 1956, p. 156.

criticism and the teaching of literature to develop along lines where there is room for development and where such development is desirable. One is the study of the intrinsic qualities of a poem, the other is the study of the background and related material whereby apperception is made strong and deep. The exploitation of intrinsic qualities is performed by the study of words rhythm, metre, imagery, etc. and is contained in the general study of *style.* The provision for the understanding of background and related material has to be furnished by encouraging the study of the historical, social, anthropological, and psychological content of Tamil Literature. The background studies would apply not only to ancient Literature but to modern literature and contemporary writing as well. To use terms which have been already used, the stylistic aspects of the text may be known as the *micro context*, and the background associated material as the *macro context.*[4] The study of micro text would be textual contextualization, and the study of the background associated material would be cultural contextualization.[5]

II

Limitations of Early Tamil Criticism

The course of Tamil Literary criticism has employed both methods in its history. The application of the norms of mētre and or rhetoric to the explication of poetry has been assiduous, as has been also the exploitation of related material by the commentators. In the commentators is seen the effort to explain the norms of grammar and rhetoric by meticulous illustrations from literature, and to justify literary usage by appealing to grammar and rhetoric. The method is exegetical, grammatical and paraphrasic since the commentators were writing for a generation which came about twelve or fourteen centuries after the compilation of the works which they sought to explain. Hence their scope is to make the text intelligible, with paraphrase and notes on obsolete or difficult

4. These terms are used in a much wider sense than that used by M. Riffaterre, '*Stylistic Context*', *word* XVI (1960), pp. 207-18, and Stephen Ullman, *Language and Style*, 1964, p. 83.

5. Nils Erik Enkvist, John Spencer, Micheal J. Gregory, *Linguistics and Style,* Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 83.

lexical items, and explain obscure points of grammar and meaning by appeal to usage in parallel passages or in the grammatical norms of Tolkaapiyam. Seldom do they enter into literary criticism as it is conceived in the modern period, or into historical or sociological study. The problem of style is, therefore, treated only when the text calls for explication by stating the technical term of a difficult figure or trope.

But the exegesis and commentary of the text has also called for greater information concerning related fields, and all related material. The Lexical glossaries (Nigantu) furnished such related information in a limited and catalogue manner, and all the commentators furnish this kind of information. Aṭiyaarkkunallaar, however, is more diffuse and draws material for the explanation of arts and crafts from a large range of books, some of them now lost to us. His commentary on the lines referring to Music, to Dance, to Dreams, to Robbers, and to geographical and religious allusions, show that an encyclopaedic knowledge was required of the commentator and that the commentators whose works have survived were literary geniuses and critics of high intellectual calibre and of a wide range of studies.

But interpretation of the classics varies with each generation, and there are, no doubt, progress made in branches of learning, which should benefit the interpretation of the ancient texts. We, perhaps know more now than Aṭiyaarkkunallaar did of certain aspects of the trade of the *Yavanar* who lived in Kaaverippoompaṭṭinam of the *Cilappatikaaram,* and more than Naccinaarkiniyar did of the same city when he commented on the *Paṭṭinappalai.* Because the language of the Tamil classics was nearer to the period of the commentators, they may not even have the taste of classicness which we have, because one of the norms which makes for the charm of poetry is its archaicness which produces in turn an element of novelty and surprise for a new generation, detached in time from the period in which the literature was composed. The period of the commentators must have been one in which the Cankam classics were rediscovered, and ours is a period in which they have been rediscovered, once again. The language of ordinary speech has been "used up" and poets and writers have constantly to find new possibilities for language if they wish to arrest the attention of their readers. We are able to find in the classics new

levels of experience, new strata of stimulus, and new patterns of association. Further we have possibilities for the study of Tamil Literature in comparison with other literatures, such as previous generations never had.

III

Textual Contextualisation

Since Stylistics is the "expressive potential of language", it may be studied under Linguistic stylistics, Metrical stylistics, Imagery stylistics and Psychological stylistics. Each one of these divisions overlap, and has its own limitations and does not represent by itself the total content of a work of art or its entire analysis. But in examining and evaluating a work of art it is by such aspectual and partial studies, later synthesised, that the elements of unity and unity itself of a work of art are understood.

Under *Linguistic stylistics* would come all the devices of the poet by which he arrives at expressiveness and explicitness and organisation of language; his use of common speech or dialect, or literary language, his peculiar usages, his idioms, his repetitions of sound, his inversion of word order, his transpositions, his hierarchies of clauses, his syntactical patterns, his action words and his qualifiers, and the evidence of his exercising the liberty of choice between possible variants. His adherence to traditional literary language would also be considered. In linguistic stylistics, statistical studies, word counts etc. provide data for conclusions with a great margin of probability, though high statistical frequency is no indication that expressiveness is attained by frequent usage alone. Without confirmation by statistical data, however, studies of this kind remain impressionistic and intuitive. Ullmann would suggest parallel divisions in stylistics as in Linguistics, namely, phonological stylistics, lexical stylistics, and syntactical stylistics.[6]

6. Stephen Ullmann, *Language and Style*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1964; Michal A. K. Halliday, *The Linguistic Study of Literary Texts*, in Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Linguistics, Cambridge, Mass. August 27-31, 1962, Mounton & Co. The Hague, 1964, p. 303. "Linguistic Stylistics is thus essentially a comparative study. To pursue the example above, we also need to know the relative frequency of this clause structure in other works of the same period and the same genre."

Our analysis of individual style should be such that we are able to characterise individual styles of different books and different periods by generalisations such as conceptual, sensuous, decisive, tense, colourful, subjective, abstract, concrete, only after a detailed analysis and frequency study of the stylistic patterns of a work of art, done preferably in comparison with other works of Art.

Metrical Stylistics

Up to very recent times, in fact, up to the popularisation of printing, Tamil poetry was written or dictated and was meant for oral recitation. Verse in its area of discourse included medical and other scientific work. Poetry orally recited or sung has features which poetry meant for the printed page has not, and the melodic and metrical effects of early poetry are not fully exploited until the manner of the original recitation is reproduced. The change of metre in the long epic poems of the *Ahaval* category in the narrative viruttam, is often or always accompanied by a change of topic, or of sense, or arrests the attention of the hearer to indicate a new theme or transition from one mental concept to another.

The purpose of metrical variations should be explored and the onomatopoeic variations and their relation to situations adequately studied. Initial rhyme is characteristic of Tamil poetry and initial rhyme imposes metrical functions which end rhyme does not. The one initiates new lines of thought while the other completes thought. The long ahaval sustains an atmosphere of suspense, the venba has the element of finality, and the viruttam, though capable of melodious variations, imposes certain limits to the thought and expressiveness of the poet. In minor poetry and in folk poetry, dance and drama combine to add to variations in metre. To the category of Iyal Tamil belong a field of metrical devices closely connected with literature. The concepts of pitch and juncture and quantitative elongation of vowels have to be applied to analyse our texts as read or recited. Metrical stylistics, therefore, may not be so limited in its scope or so distant from other areas of stylistics.

Imagery Stylistics

Imagery stylistics enters into the frequency distribution and the nature of the images (metonymy, similie, myth) used by an author. It studies his use of colour and of light, the senses to which

his images recall, and the range of his poetic fancy. The Greeks are said to have been colour blind, but perhaps this would not be quite true of our Cankam poets. But it would be most interesting to see what use is made of Light and Darkness, and the White and Red, Yellow and Blue and Dark shades. Tiruvalluvar's use of ஒளி and இருள் is most interesting to trace, but வெண்மை has a range of meaning from the வெள்ளைக்கோட்டி of Ilanko, to the வெள்ளைத் தாமரைப்பூவிலிருப்பாள் of Bharati. Bharati's use of the sunrise and the dawn is almost like a symbol, poet of freedom that he was. In Bharatidasan however the lines are heavily charged with gustatory imagery, of fruits, of paaku and honey, and even தமிழ்க்கனி பிழியுங்காலே.

The synaesthesia figure runs through Tamil Literature and unless a count is made we shall not be able to state how frequent it is. Bharati's தேன் வந்து பாயுது காதினிலே can find parallels even in several ancient works.

It should be an interesting contribution to study period imagery and designate it by generalised terms and to see how far the period imagery corresponds to the spirit of the age. Cryptic and terse imagery of the Cankam period becomes very elaborate with the passage of time and seem to become most involved in the Cintamani, in Kambaramayanam, and much more embellished in the 18th and 19th century poets. To trace one image through the centuries or in one particular author, might show a new path for image study, which well might become symbolism in some of them.

Psychological Stylistics

This term is rather ambiguous, but means the interpretation of the text in terms of psychology, and contains the implication that the psychology of an author may be evident in his style i.e. in the choice of his words and the selection of his figures, types and symbols, and in the psychology of his characters. This assumption is open to several pitfalls, because the author's own life and psychology need not necessarily be reflected in his works. However, such studies are of interest, particularly if idiosyncrasies of style, frequency of certain idioms and key words find corroborative evidence in extra-literary sources, say from his own letters or incidents of his life. In Kamban's imagery the sea and figures

drawn from the ocean, occur in remarkable frequency, especially in the first Kaandams of his epic. The river is source for some of his finest verses. If it were argued that the frequency might be due to his consciousness of naval power in his period, or that the frequency is due to his awareness of Tirumaal Narayanan even in his subconscious worship, would literary criticism come by great and irreparable harm? Such conjectures based on the text would only serve to increase the possibilities of psychoanalytic applications to literature, and widen the areas for the application to literature of contemporary advances in psychology. One may argue from stylisic analysis and linguistic traits the philosophy and beliefs of a particular author. Is it not evident that the otherwise soft-spoken Appar, Gnanasambandar, and Sekkilar reserve their strongest epithets for the Jains and the Buddhists. Kamban seems to compose his epic as if he were watching the *Ramayanam* enacted before his eye as he composed it, and his architectural language shows a familiarity with stone palaces and temples which other poets of his age do not show. Psychological stylistics, however, can be open to such subjectivity as other branches of stylistics are not open. The correction is in the dialectic that should be established between impressions and subjectivity on the one hand and the objective findings in the text and in associated material.[7]

Having studied individual style under these aspects, it would be very much easier to make useful generalisations on period style and genre style.

Cultural contextualization

It has been pointed out that the emphasis of Western Literary Criticism is today on the aesthetic aspects of a work of literature, and the stylistic analysis which has been outlined will explore the poem further as a poem and as a feature of Language usage. But if apperception, appreciation, and evaluation of the work are to be made yet stronger and more and more meaningful, the work should be studied not only in relation to stylistic variants in contemporary works or modern works, but also in relation to the milieu, the social political and historical circumstances in which

7. Ludwig Reiners, Stilkunat, C. H. Beck, Munich, 1961,

the work was written, or of which it was evidence. Some authoritative literary critics are among those who might label such milieu studies as historicism and reconstructionism. To relate a poem written in an earlier century to our own times, and to compare it with our own usage is natural enough, but the full import of language and its semantic nuances, and the parody and irony and allusiveness of the works can hardly be known unless such milieu studies are forthcoming to add to the existing literature of Tamil Literary scholarship. This is part of the programme of interdisciplinary studies and of integration which should be encouraged.

Since Religion and Philosophy have been the specialised fields of earlier writers and commentators, these fields have been adequately studied as to explain the relation of Word and Thought in Tamil Literature. But it is not so with new disciplines in the social sciences, the utilization of which would add to the understanding of the cultural setting. Social History, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Individual and Social Psychology, the Fine Arts, are the fields which require to be applied to the interpretation of Tamil Literature.

By Literary Sociology in this paper, is meant the prevenance of poets or the social classes from which they came during different periods, and the status accorded to them. The Shaman, the bard and the poet had important roles in society, before the monk, the Minister of State and the court-poet took over from them. Data gathered from their works and related to extra-literary sources give us the cultural background for the understanding of their works. With the scarcity of historical material for the study of society and social history in the earlier periods, we have no other option but to draw out as much social and cultural information from Tamil texts, as much as the texts themselves will offer. For the social history of the Tamils, Literature has remained up to now the primary source.

The application of social and cultural anthropology to Tamil Literature promises to be a most fascinating and rewarding study. Though Ralph Linton took into consideration the *Tolkaapiyam* in his *Tree of Culture,* that very primary source still remains unexplored from the sociological and anthropological point of view. The *Cilappatikaram* and minor literature like the Paraṇi, the Kura-

vanci, the Paḷḷu and the ballads of folk literature portraying as they do the life and activities of particular social classes, contain elements which could be newly interpreted in the light of these popular social sciences.

An attempt should also be made to apply the findings of individual and social psychology to the characters and classes of Tamil Literature. The philosophy of the subconscious, in spite of its inadequacies, has been an auxiliary science helping the interpretation of characters in fiction and explaining the attitudes and interests of the author in his moments of creation. These interpretations have been shown at times to be wrong and groundless, but the attempt should be made so that the area of discourse available to Tamil Literary Criticism is made more expansive. Could it be argued that Bharati Dasan dwells in mercantile characters and imagery because he was the son of a merchant, and that Kamban indulges in the word Uttaman because he wrote in the time of Uttamacholan. The inference may not be always accurate but the suggestions continue to be of interest. Freud and Jung initiated the study of sub-conscious psychology, and we are yet at the fringe of this new study, but it is well worth exploring along the lines suggested by them and others the psychology of the artist in order to understand some aspects of his work.

Another wide field of knowledge which makes Tamil Literary studies more perceptive. is the history of the Tamil Fine Arts. an understanding of the dance, the music, and the achievements in painting, sculpture and architecture. The onomatoepoeia in Tamil poetry seems to have some musical instruments as its base, and the poetry concerning the Dance of Siva requires to be illustrated as well by the bronzes and sculptures. Would it not mean much more for the student to have his line திங்கள் மூன்றடுக்கிய திருமுக் குடைக்கீழ் illustrated with the sculpture of Mahavira which follows this iconographic detail, and the bhakti fervour to be illustrated by the bronzes of the Nayanmar?

Poetry as pure poetry, literature qua literature are ideal norms for literary criticism, provided cultural contextualisation is pre-supposed. Tamil Literary studies have to widen the area of interests in order to exploit the content of literature to the full. There is hardly any branch of the social sciences which will not prove of

interest to the literary critic. An encyclopaedic knowledge, an access to original literary works in several languages, and a wide range of personal and literary experience is what makes modern critics make notable contributions to Literary studies. These are the conditions of scholarship which Tamil Literary scholarship must propose to itself if it is to make its own contribution to the knowledge and understanding of Tamil Literature in Comparative Studies of word Literature.

It is a matter for gratification that papers presented at this conference have anticipated some of the developments outlined in this paper.

Ancient Musical Modes in Cilappatikaram

S. RAMANATHAN

A study of the Tamil classics like Puṛanānuru, Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai etc. reveals the high state of development of music in ancient Tamilnad. Detailed descriptions of the yāḷ, a stringed insrument, are frequently met with. Paṇs or musical modes like Cevvaḷi, marutam etc. are referred to. Tolkāppiyam, the Tamil grammar, prescribes particular yāḷs and paṇs as belonging to the five-fold division of the land viz. mullai, kuriñci, marutam, pālai and neytal.[1] In spite of all this wealth of material, the musicologist is baffled by the paucity of data available in these works to identify these paṇs. It is only Cilappatikāram that comes to the rescue.

Iḷaṅkōvaṭikaḷ, the author of Cilappatikāram was a Cēra prince and a great adept in the arts of music, dance and drama. The araṅkeṟṟukādai, the chapter dealing with the danseuse Mātavi's debut, is verily a short treatise on dance. The ideal auditorium, the yāḷ player, musician, flutist, drummer and the composer are all described in minute detail. The musical scales that were sung at the time of the debut are also referred to:

தொழுவிடை யேறு குறித்து வளர்த்தார்
எழுவ ரிளங் கோதையார்
என்றுதன் மகளை நோக்கித்
தொன்றுபடு முறையானிறுத்தி

1. தெய்வம் உணாவே மாமரம் புட்பறை
செய்தி யாழின் பகுதியொடு தொகை இ
அவ்வகை பிறவும் கருவென மொழிப
தொல்காப்பியம்: பொருள் அகத்திணையியல் 18.

இடை முதுமகளி வர்க்குப்
படைத்துக்கோட் பெயரிடுவாள்
குடமுத லிடமுறை யாக்குரல்துத்தம்
கைக்கிளை யுழையிளி விளரி தாரமென
விரிதரு பூங்குழல் வேண்டிய பெயரே. :—சிலப். ஆய்ச்சியர் குரவை.

In this passage are found the names of the seven notes viz. kural, tuttam, kaikkiḷai, uḷai, iḷi, viḷari and tāram and also the seven pālais or scales viz. cempalai, paṭumalaippālai, cevvaḻi, arumpālai, kōṭippālai, viḷarippālai and mēṟcempālai.

The term vampuṟu marapu (வம்புறு மரபு) which means the new tradition is significant. The older tradition is described in a later chapter, āycciyar-kuravai. The seven musical notes are introduced here in a more picturesque fashion. They figure as seven celestial maidens worshipping the Lord by music and dance.

Vaṭṭappālai:

Seven maidens stand in a circle and dance singing the praise of the Lord.[2]

The significance of this formation is that it is the time-honoured method of arranging the seven notes of the Tamil gamut in the circular fashion called vaṭṭappālai

மண்டிலம்	= circle.
தொன்று படு முறை	= time-honoured way.

The two commentators of Cilappatikāram, Aṭiyārkkunallār and Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar have quoted profusely from ancient Tamil treatises on music to explain Vaṭṭappālai.

Arumpatavuraikarar in his commentary has given extracts from old treatises to show how the circle is to be drawn and how the seven notes are allocated that respective positions therein.[3]

2. அவர்தாம், செந்நிலை மண்டிலத்தால் கற்கடக்
—கைகோ ஒத்(து)
அந்நிலையே ஆடற்சீர் ஆய்ந்துளார்—
சிலப். ஆய்ச். கூத்துள் படுதல்

3. ஆழியு மாரும் போற் கீறிச்சிறு திகைக்கண்
ஊழிரெரோ பொன்றுடன் கீறிச்—சூழ
எருதாதி கீழ்த்திசைக்கொண்டீராறு மெண்ணிக்
கருதி நிலக்கயிற்றைக்காண்.

Aṭiyārkkunallār's commentary is very elaborate and is verily a mine of information on the musical scales of the ancient Tamils. The four major modes and the seven palais mentioned by Ilanko in the arangeṛṛukadai are delineated.[4]

இளியிடபங் கற்கடமாம்—விளரிசிங்கம்
தளராத தாரமதுவாம்—தளராத
குரல்கோற்ற றனுத்துத்தம் கும்பம் கிளையாம்
வரலால் உழை மீனமாம்.

குரல்துலை வில்துத்தம் கைக்கிளையே கும்பம்
பரிய உழை மீனமாம் பாவாய்—அரிதாரம்
கொல்லேறிளி விளரி கற்கடங்கோப்பமைந்த
தொல்லை யிசைநரம்பிற் காம்.

சிலப். ஆய்ச். அரும்பதவுரை.

4\. *பாலை நான்கு வகைப்படும். ஆயப்பாலை, சதுரப்பாலை, திரிகோணப்பாலை, வட்டப்பாலையென,*
என்னை— "ஆயஞ் சதுரந்திரிகோணம் வட்டமெனப் பாய,
நான்கும் பாலையாகும்" என்றார்.

அவற்றுள் வட்டப்பாலை வருமாறு: "வட்டமென்பது வகுக்குங்காலை ஓரேழ்தொடுத்த மண்டலமாகும். "சாணளவு கொண்டதொரு வட்டந்தன்மீது பேணியிருநாலு பெருந்திசைக்—கோணத்திருகயிறு மேலோட்டியொன்பானு மூன்றும், வருமுறையே மண்டலத்தை வை" என்பது சூத்திரம். என்னுதலிற்றோவெனின், வட்டப்பாலை மண்டலம் வருமிடத்துச் சாணுக்குச் சாணாக ஒரு வட்டம் கீறிப் பெருந்திசைகளின் மேலே இரண்டு வரம்பு கீறி மண்டலம் செய்து பன்னிரண்டு கோணமாக வகுப்பது நுதலிற்று.

"எதிரு மிராசி வலமிடமாக, எதிராவிடமீனமாக முதிராத ஈராறிராசிகளை யிட்டவே நோக்கவே, ஏரார்ந்த மண்டலமென்றென்" என்பது சூத்திரம். என்னுதலிற்றோவெனின் இட்ட பன்னிரண்டு கோணத்திற் பன்னிரண்டிராசிகளை நிறுத்தினால் இவற்றுள் நரம்புடன் இயல்வன ஏழென்பது உணர்த்துதல் நுதலிற்று.

"ஏத்துமிடப மலவனுடன் சீயம் கோற்றனுக்கும்பமொடு மீனமிவை— பார்த்துக் குரன்முதற்றார மிருவாய்க்கிடந்த நிரலேழுஞ் செம்பாலை நேர்" இவ்வேழும் இடபம் கற்கடகம் சிங்கம் துலாம் தனு கும்பம் மீனமென இவற்றுள் நிற்கும்.

"துலை நிலைக்குரலுந் தனுநிலைத்துத்தமும், நிலைபெறுகும்பத்து நேர்கைக் கிளையும் மீனத்துழையும், விடைநிலத்திளியும் மானக் கடகத்து மன்னிய விளரியும் அரியிடைத் தாரமும் அணைவுறக் கொளலே."

இனி இந்நரம்புகளின் மாத்திரைகள் வருமாறு: "குரறுத்த நான்கு இளை மூன்றிரண்டாம் குரையாவுழையிளி நான்கு விரையா, விளரியெனின் மூன்றிரண்டு தாரமெனச் சொன்னார், களரிசேர் கண்ணுற்றவர்" எனக்கொள்க.

இவற்றுள் தாரத்து உழை பிறக்கும்; உழையிற் குரல் பிறக்கும். குரலுள் இளி பிறக்கும்; இளியுள் துத்தம் பிறக்கும்; துத்தத்துள் விளரி பிறக்கும்; விளரியுட் கைக்கிளை பிறக்கும் எனக்கொள்க. இவற்றுள் முதலில் தோன்றிய நரம்பு தாரம்; இவை விரிப்பிற் பெருகும்; வந்த வழிக்கண்டு கொள்க.

Vaṭṭappālai is one of the four varieties of pālai: āyam, caturam, tirikōṇam and vaṭṭam—linear, square, triangular and circular. In the Cilappatikāram, only the linear and the circular varieties are described.

e.g. நீடிக்கிடந்த கேள்விக்கிடக்கை
ஈரேழ்தொடுத்த செம்முறைக் கேள்வி —*ayam.*
செந்நிலை மண்டிலத்தால் —*vattam.*

In the vaṭṭappālai, a circle is drawn and 12 radii drawn. The 12 divisions represent the 12 places in the zodiac. The seven note-positions are indicated in the zodiac thus:

Tulām	viruccikkam	tanusu	makaram	kumpam	mīnam
Kural		tuttam		kaikkilai	uḷai

mēṭm	itapam	mitunam	katakam	cimmam	kanni.
	ili		viḷari	tāram	

The twelve-fold division of the zodiac is an ingenious contrivance to represent the 12 semitones in the octave. The primordial scale of Tamil music can be immediately recognised as the equivalent of the modern Harikambhoji; C D E F G A Bb.

இனி வட்டப்பாலையிலே நாலு பண்ணும்-பிறக்கும்; "தாரத்துழை தோன்றப் பாலை யாழ் தண்குரல் ஒரு முழை தோன்றக் குறிஞ்சியாழ் நேரே இளிகுரலிற்றோன்ற மருதயாழ் துத்தம், இளியிற் பிறக்க நெய்தலியாழ்" இவற்றுள் பாலையாழுள்ளே ஏழு பாலையிசை பிறக்கும். "குரலிளியிற் பாகத்தை வாங்கியோரொன்று வரையாது தாரத்துழைக்கும்—விரைவின்றி எத்தும் விளரி கிளைக்கீக்க வேந்திழையாய், துத்தங் குரலாகுஞ்ச சொல்."

இந்நரம்பிற் பாலை பிறக்குமிடத்துக்குரலும் துத்தமும் இளியும் நான்கு மாத்திரை பெறும், கைக்கிளையும் விளரியும் மூன்று மாத்திரை பெறும்; உழையும் தாரமும் இரண்டு மாத்திரை பெறும்; இவற்றுள் குரல் குரலாய் ஒத்துநின்றது செம்பாலை; இதனிலெ குரலிற் பாகத்தையும் இளியிற் பாகத்தையும் வாங்கிக் கைக்கிளை உழை விளரி தாரத்திற்கு ஓரோவொன்றைக் கொண்டு சேர்க்கத் துத்தம் குரலாய்ப் படுமலைப்பாலையாம். இவ்வாறே திரிக்க இவ்வேழு பெரும்பாலைகளும் பிறக்கும்; பிறக்குங்கால் திரிந்த குரல் முதலாக ஏழும் பிறக்கும்.

அவை பிறக்குமாறு: குரல் குரலாயது செம்பாலை; துத்தம் குரலாயது படுமலைப்பாலை; கைக்கிளை குரலாயது செவ்வழிப்பாலை. உழை குரலாயது அரும்பாலை; இளிகுரலாயது 'கோடிப்பாலை; விளரி குரலாயது விளரிப்பாலை; தாரம் குரலாயது மேற்செம்பாலையென வலமுறையே ஏழுபாலையும் கண்டு கொள்க. இதனை வலமுறையென்றும்; மேற்கே முகமாக இருந்து திரிதலன். கிழக்கே நோக்கியிருக்கின் இடமுறையாமெனக்கொள்க.

சிலப், ஆய்ச்சியர் குரவை
அடியார்க்கு நல்லார் உரை.

22 srutis: The intervals between the notes are indicated in terms of *mattirais* otherwise called *alakus* or srutis.

Kural	tuttam	kaikkiḷai	uḷai	iḷi	viḷari	tāram
S	R	G	M	P	D	N
4	4	3	2	4	3	2

The sempalai scale is identical with the major diatonic scale except for the B.

Major scale: CMajor DMinor ESemi FMajor GMinor AMajor BSemiC'

Cempālai:	Ku	T	K	U	I	V	Ta	Kú
	4	3	2	4	3	2	4	
Harikanbhoji:	S R	G	M	P	D	N	Ṡ	

The four-sruti intervals correspond to the major tone, three-sruti intervals to minor tone and two-sruti intervals to the semitone.

The values of the notes of cempālai are as follows:

Ku	T	K	U	I	V	Ta
S	R	G	M	P	D	N
1	9/8	5/4	4/3	3/2	5/3	16/9

In terms of srutis, taking Sa to be zero, the other notes will be at the 4th, 7th, 9th, 13th, 16th, 18 & 22 srutis.

It may be profitable here to compare this scale with the Shaḍja Grāma described by Bharata in his Nātya Śāstra. Bharata's scale also has 22 srutis to the octave but the distribution is different.

S	R	G	M	P	D	N
4	3	2	4	4	3	2

It will be clear that if we start from Iḷi Ie. fifth of cempālai, the resultant scale is Shaḍja Grāma.

This also serves to expose the fallacy of later interpreters who sought to equate the Shaḍja Grāma with the modern Kanakāṅgi. The present writer has shown in another paper how the mistaken interpretation arose. If we play the notes of Harikambhoji from Pa to Pa, the resultant scale is only Kharaharapriya.

Let us now consider cempālai and Shaḍja Grāma in juxtaposition:

Māttirai or Sruti	Shadja Grama	Cempala
0	S	Ku
1		
2		
3	R	
4		T
5	G	
6		
7		K
8		
9	M	U
10		
11		
12		
13	P	I
14		
15		
16	D	V
17		
18	N	Ta
19		
20		
21		
22	Ś	K′

The notes common to both are S,M,P,D, & N. In the Shaḍja Grāma R is at the 3rd and G at the 5th srutis.

We shall now see how other scales are derived from the fundamental scale, cempālai. The passages in Aḍiyarkkunallar's commentary explains how this is accomplished. The process is called kural tiripu which may be translated as the shifting of tonic. It is of two kinds: வலமுறை and இடமுறை: clockwise and anti-clockwise. There is an important verse in the commentary followed by a prose explanation by Aḍiyarkkunallar which is the key to the whole process. A lack of understanding and applying of this verse has unfortunately resulted in many a scholar being misled in the identification of the derivative modes. The verse is as follows:

குரலிளியிற் பாகத்தை வாங்கியோ ரொன்று
வரையாது தாரத் துழைக்கும்—விரைவின்றி
எத்துணும் விளரி கிளைக்கீக்க ஏந்திழையாய்
நிற்கும் குரலாகும் சொல்—சிலப். ஆய்ச். அடியார்க்கு நல்லார் உரை.

The intervals of the resultant scale are 2 4 4 3 2 4 3; i.e. the note positions are 0 4 8 11 13 17 20. It can readily be recognised as Kalyani. The meaning of துத்தம் குரலாகும் is that the tuttam of the resultant scale and kural of the fundamental scale will coincide.

	Ku	T	K	U	I	V	Ta	
	4	4	3	2	4	3	2	— cempālai
2	4	4	3	2	4	3		— paḍumalaippālai.
Ku	T	K	U	I	V	Ta		

Scholars who have not taken into consideration the verse and Aḍiyarkkunallar's commentary have mistakenly understood the other way about, i.e., starting from the tuttam of cempālai have arrived at Naṭabhairavi. Even a cursory glance at the sruti values of Paḍumalaippālai will reveal that it cannot be Naṭabhairavi. The uḷai or Ma at the 11th sruti cannot belong to Naṭabhairavi. Expecting Ri or tuttam, all the other notes are higher than that of cempālai. Musicians will also appreciate how the Ga of Kalyani has a gentle shake or gamaka and is slightly higher in pitch than the correct antaragandhara.

In வலமுறை, the equivalents of other scales are:

Paḍumalaippālai — Kalyani
Cevvaḷi — Tōḍi
Arumpālai — Karaharapriya
Kōḍippālai — Saṅkarabharana
Mērccempālai — Naṭabhairavi
Viḷarippālai — Tōḍi with reduced panchama.

In the araṅgerṟu kādai, the fundamental scale which provides the basis for kural tiripu is Arumpālai — the equivalent of Shaḍja Grāma. The significance of வம்புறுமரபு will be appreciated if we consider that those were the times when the mingling of the two cultures Northern and Southern was taking place.

The viḷarippālai with its wrong fifth could not produce other derivatives.

The four major modes and 103 paṇs: From the commentaries, it is gathered that there were 103 paṇs in vogue in Tamilnad even in the distant past. The names of these 103 paṇs are found in lexicons like Tivākaram and Piṅkalantai. Of these, four were called Major modes — நாற்பெரும் பண்கள்.

Confusion is rampant also in the identification of these modes.

Pālaiyāḻ: The tuning of the strings of the yaḻ was done by the process of fifths:

வண்ணப்பட்டடை யாழ்மேல் வைத்து—அரங்
இளிக்கிரமத்தாலே பண்களை யாழ்மேல் வைத்து—
அடியார்க்கு நல்லார் உரை.

இளி = fifth; *கிரமம்* = method, order. Starting from taram and proceeding by fifths, the resultant scale is Pālaiyāḻ. The genesis of the notes is also given in Aḍiyarkkunallar: Ta, U, Ku, I, T, V, K. i.e., Bb F C G D A E.

பாலையாமுள்ளே குரலாயது செம்பாலை. So Pālaiyāḻ and cempālai are synonyms. Scholars who have taken cempālai as equivalent to Harikambhoji but equate Pālaiyāḻ with Sankarabharana will readily see the discrepancy.

2. *Kuriñciyāḻ*: Starting from uḻai and proceeding by fifths. the resultant pan is kuṟiñciyāḻ. It takes the same notes as those of the Kuṟiñci Rāga, including the characteristic 'ni'.

The kuṟam melodies sung by the gypsies is even today in this mode. There are a few references in Cilappadikaram that show that this mode was sung by hunters and others belonging to the hilly region.

3. *Marutam*: Starting from kural and proceeding by fifths the resultant scale is as follows: C G D A E B F #.

4. *Neital*: Starting from iḷi and proceeding by fifths, the resultant scale is as follows: G D A E B F # C #.

In this scale the tonic note C will be seen to be bypassed. So this is referred to as tiṟaniyāḻ — the paṇ without derivatives, or the unpliable paṇ.

So neithaliyāḻ is substituted by cevaḷi which is arrived at by the process of fifths last note of neital — namely C # or Db.

Db Ab Eb Bb F C G. This is the equivalent of cevvaḷi or Todi.

It may be appreciated that the folk-songs called ōṭam (*ஓடம்*) are still in the Punnāgavarāḷi, a derivative of Tōḍi.

Of the 4 major modes, the pālayāḻ coincides with cempālai,
Kuṛiñci with Kōḍippālai
and Marutam with paḍumalaippālai.

Cevvaḻi occurs in both. It may be noted that the major modes are obtained by Iḷikkiramam or cycle of fifths whereas the seven pālais are obtained by kural tiripu or model shift of tonic.

The fundamental scale cempālai is considered as very auspicious :

பாற்பட நின்ற பாலைப்பண்

It is no wonder that the flute which always leads an orchestra was and is perforated according to the notes of cempālai; i.e. if you start from Sa and fully open the holes one by one, Harikambhoji is heard: *காம்பு ஊதி காம்போதி.*

5. *Mullaippan*: The four major modes explained above were all heptatonic. These were the modes prescribed for pālai, kuṛiñci, marutam and neytal regions. The malaippaṉ prescribed for mullai region is a pentatonic mode.

It was given to the present writer to identify it with the modern Mōhana. The passage in Cilappatikāram contains a description of this mode:

குரல்மந்தமாக இளிசமனாக
வரன்முறையே துத்தம் வலியா—உரனியா
மந்தம் விளரி பிடிப்பாள் அவள் நட்பின்

Only four notes are mentioned here, the fifth probably being considered too obvious. But the fifth is ascertained by a verse in Sēkkiḻār's Ānāyanāyanār purāṇam.

Knowing the missing notes to be U, T i.e. F and B, we can easily recognise the scale now. The Tamil Isai Sangam Paṇ Research Conference have discussed this and accepted my thesis (vide Report).

Paṇ Nōtiṛam or Puṛanīrmai:

பாண்வாய் வண்டு நோதிறம் பாடக்
குவளைக்கண்மலர் விழிப்ப

Puranirmai figures in the Tevaram. It is a very popular raga and is the equivalent of Bhūpāla, another pentatonic mode, a dawn mode.

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Names of Musical Modes and their Symbols

S	=	Shaḍja	Ku	=	Kural
R	=	Rishabha	T	=	Tuttam
G	=	Gāndhara	K	=	Kaikkiḷai
M	=	Madhyama	U	=	Uḻai
P	=	Pañcama	I	=	Iḷi
D	=	Dhaivata	V	=	Viḷari
N	=	Nishāda	Ta	=	Tāram

The Music of the Ancient Tamils

V. P. RAMAN

Music is the most elusive of all arts. It can at best, when soft voices die, vibrate in the memory, as the poet said. Sculpture, painting and literature leave concrete images behind for posterity to apprehend, appreciate and approbate. But the beauty of songs is temporary and evanescent,, never even to be recapitulated. Any study of ancient music has therefore a double disadvantage: the fact that it is ancient; and the fact that it has left no tangible matter behind for a straight study. The Grand Anicut or the great temple at Thanjavur have survived centuries to give us an idea of the engineering or architectural skill of the Chola Emperors. But the music we heard on last night's radio is gone for ever. Even modern recording devices, in my view, can hardly be said to capture the spirit of a live concert though undoubtedly they preserve the form from erasure and save it for future reproduction.

Music has been learnt in India traditionally from master to pupil over generations. Even a competent system of notation leaves much scope for individual variation. Indian music is notorious for not using any generally accepted notation, and music teachers are known for the esoteric way in which they treasure their sometimes even meagre knowledge and refuse to impart it to students except under great pressure. Small wonder that masterpieces have been lost and succeeding generations have had to grope in the dark to get some idea of what our ancients did.

An effort to understand our ancient music has therefore necessarily to proceed on an indirect study based on the usual source - materials, namely old literature bearing references to contemporary music, and archaeological exhibits like sculpture,

painting and inscriptions. We shall therefore briefly examine references to music in our literature.

The history of Tamil literature has been considered to fall into six well-defined periods. They are:—

I. The Sangam Period (3rd Sangam) — 200 BC to 300 AD.
II. The Post Sangam Period — 300 AD to 600 AD.
III. The early Mediaeval Period — 600 AD. to 1200 AD.
IV. The later Mediaeval Period — 1200 AD to 1800 AD.
V. The Pre-Modern Period — 1800 AD to 1900 AD.
VI. The Modern Period — 1900 AD to the present day.[1]

It should be noted that even the earliest period, namely the Sangam period, starts with the third Sangam, presupposing the existence of two prior Sangams or Academies at which poets and scholars must have congregated and conferred. It is also recognised that the Tamil language dates back to quite a few centuries before Christ. That Tamil music and dance must have been highly developed even before the time of Bharata, the renowned author of the 'Natya Sastra' (one of the earliest extant Sanskrit Works on Art) can be seen from a reference in that work to "Dakshina" music and dance.[2] There is also a tradition that separate Academies were held for all the three branches of Tamil, viz., Literature, Music and Drama, which again confirms both the antiquity and development of our ancient music.[3]

For the purposes of this paper, I intend to treat the entire period 200 BC to 1200 AD as Ancient, and the subsequent period as Modern, omitting the mediaeval classification altogether. This is because much of the material that throws any light at all on this subject was written between the 6th and the 12th centuries, including valuable commentaries on earlier Sangam works. If this material is excluded one would be left with very little concrete data. Moreover, the period of the great Saiva Saints and the

1. Dr. A. C. Chettiar in "An Introduction to Tamil Poetry"—*The Tamil Culture*, Volume VII, page 56.
2. *Bharata's Natya Sastra*, Chapters IV & V.
3. " எழிசைச் சூழல்புக்கோ " —*Tiruchitrambala Kovai.*

religious revivalism that they sparked off, is significant in its contribution to the growth and development of Tamil Music.

While looking for references in ancient Tamil works to music, one may conveniently begin with the *"Tholkappiam"* whose antiquity is beyond question. Though primarily a text on grammar, there are references in this work to the natural geographical divisions of Tamil Nad viz., the pastoral region (Mullai) the hilly areas (Kurunchi), the arable lands (Marutham) and the coastal belt (Neithal). Waste lands (Palai) was also added to this classification. Each of these areas would seem to have had its own characteristic music and the *Yazh* was the most predominant instrument. Existing material as at present studies is quite insufficient to understand in any great detail the kinds of melodies that were employed, but references found in the poetry of the time make it clear that the five areas referred to had their own distinct melodies.

The word *Pann* (பண்) meaning music, which dominates any study of Tamil Music, finds a place in this ancient work. A number of other words related to *Pann,* such as *Pannai* (பண்ணை) — the place where music is sung, and *Pannathi* (பண்ணத்தி) — a poem set to music are also to be found.

We are also told that there were several kinds of artists, who constituted essential elements of ancient society. They were the *kuthar* (dancer and dramatist), *panar* and *porunar,* the musician, and *virali,* the lady artist. The *panars* themselves were further sub-divided into *peria-panar* and *siria-panar,* possibly based on the size and scope of the instruments played on by them.[4]

The next major work which has furnished endless material for research is undoubtedly the epic 'Silapathikaram'. This monumental work of Elango Adigal has been placed in the latter part of the first century A.D. The author was the younger son of Seralathan and the brother of the famous Seran Senguttuvan. In this work, there are several references to contemporary art, especially

4. See " *இன்குரற் சீறியாழிட வழிற்றழிஇ* "
—(*Sirupannarrupadai,* line 35).
and " *இடனுடை பேரியாழ் முறை யுளக் கழிப்பி* "
—(*Perum Pannarrupadai,* line 462).

music and dance. It will be no exaggeration to state that but for this work at least having withstood the onslaught of time, we would be felt with far less material to work on than we have at present. This is not an inappropriate place to record the eternal gratitude which all Tamil lovers and scholars owe to that grand old man, the late Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer. But for his missionary zeal to unearth our ancient treasures, most of these works may have languished in their palm leaf abodes for ever, and never been printed.

Apart from the 'Silapathikaram' among the earliest works extant, it would be proper to refer an another Sangam work the *Paripadal*, which has been included in the anthology *Ettu Thugai*. This was one of the earliest works to be set to music and belongs to "Isai Tamil" or Musical Tamil.[5] Even the *panns* in which they were set have been placed. The most famous commentary on the *Silapathikaram* is that of Adiyarku Nallar, who lived in the 12th Century A.D. In his erudite commentary, he refers to other ancient Tamil musical works. These include the *Perunarai, Perun Kurugu, Pancha Marapu, Tala Samudram, Pancha Bharathiyam* etc., some of which had apparently been lost even in his time. The learned commentary of the *Iraiyanar Ahapporul* gives the names of other ancient musical treatises like the *Mudu-narai, Mudu kurugu* and the *Perisai*. It also mentions the *Isai-nunukkam*, which, if its title is of any indication, must have been an advanced work on the subtleties of music. There are also a number of other works and authors, among whom reference may be made to Nedum-Palliyathanar, known for his versatile virtuosity over many instruments.[6]

The existence of these works only shows that while Silapathikaram affords us the maximum available material pertaining to the earliest Tamil music, it was by no means the first or only work on the subject. The Dark Age of Tamil literature was between 200 and 600 A.D. Several valuable works were destroyed. We can only conjecture about the precise manner of the destruction and savage vandalism motivated by political or religious feelings.

5. "*எழுதினர் பிழைப்பும் எழுதரு ஒக்கும்*
பகுதியின் வந்த பாடகர் பிழைப்பும்" — *பரிபாடல் உரை*
6. Dr. U. V. S. Iyer, *Nallurai Kovai*, Vol. III, page 81.

I have referred to this aspect of the earliest Tamil literature pertaining to music in order to show that the magnitude of our knowledge of really ancient music of the Sangam age is frankly the consciousness of the magnitude of our ignorance. We get only glimpses or flashes from old literature. It is only by approaching the question with objectivity and lack of prejudice (of any kind) that we may draw any sensible instruction. If I may enter a respectful caveat, it will not do for research scholars on ancient Tamil music to try and squeeze more out of the old textual matter than is possible. As I mentioned in the beginning, musical forms are capable of first degree understanding only by the ear; secondary evidence or musical forms derived from literature can only establish the existence of musical facts and this can never be validly upgraded into an understanding of their actual forms.

A living authority on ancient South Indian history who cannot be easily dismissed as biassed or sectarian minded in favour of Tamil (in fact, some believe the contrary) has endorsed the view that "rice, peacocks, sandalwood, every unknown article which we find imported by sea into Babylon before the fifth century B.C., brought with it, a Dravidian, not a Sanskrit designanation". He adds "In the Seventh and Sixth centuries B.C., Babylon was at the height of its splendour, the greatest commercial mart of the world; men of many nations frequented its bazzars, and we may well assume that among them were merchants from South India".[7]

I am unable to conceive of a society in which intellectual life had reached great heights, language was so highly advanced and commerce so well developed, but whose cultural life alone trailed behind in primitive simplicity. The fact that we are left comparatively ignorant of the details of its development, will hardly justify the criticism that what existed must have been of an inferior or poorly evolved character. In the apt words of the author of the article on Music in the Encylopaedia Brittanica, "When music is too archaic or inaccessible to give us aesthetic data more may be learned from the disposition of those who were pleased by it than from its recorded technical data".[8]

7. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri—*A History of South India,* page 76, (1955).
8. Volume 16—(1953) edition—page 7.

Ancient Musical Instruments

We shall next proceed to examine the nature and number of musical instruments used by the ancient Tamils. The classification of these instruments on the basis of form (whether stringed, holed or leather) as well as of function (whether solo or accompanying) is revealing.

In the Sixty-sixth distich of the *Kural,* Thiruvalluvar says "it is only those, who have not heard the lisp of their own children, who will admit the sweetness of the music of the *kuzhal* (the flute) or the *Yazh* (the harp)".[9] While trying to bring out the idea that appearances are deceptive the same author in another couplet refers to the fact that "even a crooked *Yazh* can produce sweet music".[10] In the old work *Ahananuru* there is a beautiful reference to the flute — like music produced by the natural passage of the wind through the holes in a bamboo stalk. It can be taken as well established that these two instruments were the most generally used ones in the earliest times, along with of course suitable vocal (மிடற்று) music and rhythm (தண்ணுமை).[11]

The *Yazh* itself underwent considerable evolution and development. In its most primitive form (the *vil yazh*) it was possibly not more than a bow-string. It is permissible to imagine that its musical quality must have been discovered accidentally by an astute archer, who heard its twang when he released his arrow. Forgetting myself, I can imagine how this could have led to bow-strings of different lengths and tensions being found to generate distinct sounds, some of whom were related in a musical ratio. The *Yazh* was born! There is a reference in the *Perum Pannarru Padai,* (one of the *Pathu Pattus* — Ten Idylls and therefore belonging to the earliest period) to the shepherd who bent his bow and played the *kurinji pann,* possibly serenading his girl friend.[12]

9. *Kural* 66. " குழலினிது யாழினது ...."
10. *Kural* 279. " கணைகொடிதி யாழ்கோடு ...."
11. யாழுங் குழலுஞ் சீரும் மிடறுந்
தாழ்குரல் தண்ணுமை ஆடலோ
டிவிற்றின் இசைந்த பாடல் —*Silappadhikaram* III-(26-28).
12. " குமிழின் புழற் கோட்டு தொடுத்த மரல் புரி நரம்பின் வில் யாழ்
இசைக்கும், விரல் ஏறி குறிஞ்சி ...."
—*Perum Pannarrupadai,* ll. 150-4

This does not mean that the instrument itself had not been developed by that time; the poet could well have referred to an improvisation by the romantic hunter.

Before indicating the several types of *yazhs* that were used, I may dissociate myself from a popular notion that the ancient *Yazh* was either similar to or a direct ancestor of the modern veena or lute. The better view among musical scholars is that no such identification or relationship is tenable. Among various authorities relied on, it would be sufficient to refer to only two. Thirunavukku Arasar has in a verse referred to the practice of the Veena and the Yazh separately.[13] Manicka Vachagar has in his *Thiru Vachakam* referred to Vina players and Yazh players as being two separate types of musicians.[14] To lend further assurance to this conclusion, scholars have drawn attention to the figure of the famous Thirunilakanta Yazhpanar in places like the Darasuram temple. This itinerant musician along with his gifted wife Matanga Choodamani Ammayar, is known to have travelled extensively in Tamil Nad with his *Yazh*. His figure at Darasuram near Kumbakonam with a Yazh reveals that instrument to be very different from the modern veena. Apart from the above reasons, there is also the fact that the very tuning of the ancient *Yazh* rules out any possibility of its having been played like the Veena. The *Yazh* consisted of a specified number, varying with the design, but generally consisting of 14 strings in its most popular form of Sagoda Yazh. These strings were tuned each to a different note and were plucked and allowed to vibrate freely. The length of the vibrating segment of the string was not reduced by being played on with the fingers. As is well known, the characterisic of the Veena is that the same strings, while being plucked with the right hand, are actually played on the finger board with the left hand and all the notes of the octave are produced on a single string. It would thus appear that the *Yazh* was more analogous to the lyre or harp, or possibly the *citara*. The *citara* is one of the most ancient stringed instru-

13. "பண்ணொடு யாழ் வீணை பயின்றாய் போற்றி" — திருநாவுக்கரசர்
14. இன்னிசை வீணையர் யாழினர் ஒருபால்" — திருவாசகம் திருப்பள்ளியெழுச்சி 369–1

ments, and has been traced back nearly to the 2nd millenium before Christ, and is known to have been used in ancient Greece both for accompanying the voice and for providing music for dance.[15]

The other musical instrument of considerable vogue in ancient times in Tamil Nad, as in most other countries, was the *Kuzhal* or flute. From detailed descriptions available the instrument does not appear to be very different from the regular flute of the present day. It was also made, preferably out of faultless bamboo, and had 7 holes and was used without any reeds. While referred to in *Silapthikaram* itself, this is subject of an illuminating commentary from Adiyarku Nallar. Rich details of the use of the flute are found in the chapter on Anaya Nayanar in *Peria Puranam* of Sekkilar. There is no doubt but that the potentiality of this instrument had been understood and exploited by our ancients fully.

Apart from the Flute and the Harp, as mentioned earlier, instruments for keeping rhythm (தண்ணுமை) were also known. Indeed the rhythm maker was given a very important role in the performance, and was charged with the responsibility of modulating, harmonising and regulating the concert. Adyarku Nallar notices as many as 30 percussion instruments. These varied in shape and size but usually employed a stretched leather membrane to produce sounds on percussion. Among the long list the following are easily identifiable.

The *berigai* (Kettle drum), the *udukku* (tambourine), the *mathalam,* the *murasu* (another variety of kettle-drum) and the two *parais.* These percussion instruments were further divided into several categories depending upon the time and manner of their use.

There are references in the *Thevaram* to two other instruments called the *ezhil* (எழில்) and the (தண்டு) *thandu.* These have been with justification considered to be the immediate ancestors of the modern *Nathaswaram* and *Veena* respectively.

15. *Encyclopedia Brittanica* (1953), Vol. 5, page 726.

Musical Training

I shall next refer briefly to the musical training that was imparted during the days of our forefathers. The *Arankerru Kathai* in the *Silapathikaram* is the best source of our information. In this chapter the poet describes in rich detail the training that preceded the debut of the courtesan Madhavi. While prescribing qualifications for a prospective artist, not only beauty of physical form but considerable talent in both the theory and technique of music and dancing was insisted upon. Intimate knowledge of poetry was required, thus making the possession of a keen intellect a *sine qua non.* Apparently our ancients had no place for dumb blondes!

Training started at the early age of five, and rigorous and disciplined tuition under as many as six teachers followed for seven years. These included the ஆடலாசன் (dancing master); இசை ஆசிரியன் (music teacher); இயற்றமிழ் புலவன் (Tamil poet), தண்ணுமை முதல்வன் (expert drummer); குழலோசன் (flutist) and the யாழாசிரியன் (harpist). These six tutors were no ordinary men either, as their qualifications indicate. A knowledge of comparative music, for instance, was required of the music teacher, and the poet had to be familiar with literature as well. (It is not surprising that such a complete education left Madhavi so accomplished a courtesan, that Kovalan was helplessly enslaved). That the various arts were not taught in water-tight compartments is evident. The ancient Tamils at least knew to produce a well compounded artist with a good general education, instead of encouraging illiterates with half knowledge of a single art!

Musical Notes

Every note has an ascertainable frequency, that is to say, the number of vibrations per second. When the frequency of one note is twice that of another, the former is the upper octave of the latter. This holds good whatever the absolute frequencies of the notes may be. In between a note and its upper octave, there are other notes, related to it in a definite ratio, or interval. This interval is determined by the ratio of their frequencies. It has been scientifically established however that only certain specific ratios of frequencies are musical. All possible intervals between

two notes are not musical. Certain specific intervals alone produce musical notes. As the musical ear was not different in different countries or at different points of time, it is not surprising that we get the same intervals between the musical notes in different systems of music—even though there may be drastic differences in the scales of music or in the manner of employment of these notes, or in conceptions of harmony.

Thus we have seven notes of the octave in contemporary western music notation viz., Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si (C, D, E, F, G, A, B). In modern Indian Music, whether Karnatic or Hindustani, these seven notes are represented by Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni. We find that the ancient Tamils also employed seven notes and they are described in the *Silapathikaram* as follows:—

Kural *(குரல்)*, Thuttham *(துத்தம்)*, Kaikilai *(கைக்கிளை)*, Uzhai *(உழை)*, Eli *(இளி)*, Vilari *(விளரி)*, Tharam *(தாரம்)*.

These were generally considered as being respectively equivalent to Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni in contemporary terminology. This has however been questioned by Swami Vipulananda. According to this learned author, the seven Tamil notes correspond to Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa, Ri and Ga respectively. He has also given several cogent and convincing reasons for this view, and it may be accepted. Even in modern times we see the employment of what is known as Madhyama Sruti in concerts. This is really a different tuning of the instruments and involves a shifting of the tonic for the vocalist. Is it more than a coincidence that some essentially Tamil songs sound better when rendered in this sruti?

Though the seven notes of the octave had different Tamil names there is authority in the commentaries of Arumpada Urai Asiriyar that the Sa, Ri, Ga, notation was employed when writing.[16] This had led to a view that even while the ancient Tamils used the word 'Kural', 'Thutham' etc., they wrote down the notes as Sa,

16. *"சரிகமபதநி யென்றேழெழுத்தாற்றனம்*
வரிபாந்த கண்ணிறைய் வைத்து ...."

— அரும் பதவுரையாசிரியர் உரை

Ri, Ga, etc., I am personally quite unable to accept this view. The Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma notation must have been definitely a later development at least a few centuries after the Sangam Age. The identity of Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma notation with the expansion of these letters as *Sa*djama, *Ri*shabam, *Ga*ndharam, etc. is far too much of a coincidence in point of time. That great Tamil scholar Swaminatha Ayyar says that instead of Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni now employed to describe the seven notes, the ancients while calling the notes kural, thutham etc., used the long vowels ah, ee, oo, ai. ih, oh, etc., (ஆ, ஈ, ஊ, ஏ, ஐ, ஓ etc.).[17] It is quite clear in any event that by the time of the commentator the same swaras were employed in Tamil music, as well over India. I cannot resist the thought that some time after the Sangham period and before the mediæval, some sort of forced fusion or at least a free interchange of musical ideas must have taken place. Musical modes, terms and norms, were not allowed to merely evolve in their own natural genius, but were subject to definite influences from outside. The Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma notation, to my mind, is not insignificant in this context.

The seven basic notes of the scale, then as now, have further divisions, based on intermediate musical intervals, the sharps and the flats of western terminology. Musicologists have established that the ancient Tamils had an intimate knowledge of these musical intervals, and had standardised these *srutis*.[18] Whether the total number of musical intervals recognised in ancient Tamil music is twenty-two, as generally accepted, or twenty-four as claimed by Sri Abraham Pandithar is not of much importance in this context, where my object is only to show the extent of the musical knowledge and scientific analysis of our ancients.

Ancient Musical Scales

A succession of notes constitutes a musical scale. The number and choice of the notes, as well the order of their succession,

17. See *Divakaram* "ஆ, ஈ, ஊ, ஏ, ஐ, ஓ, ஔ எனும்
இவ்வேழ் எழுத்தும் ஏழிசைக்குரிய"

18. "குரல் துத்தம் நான்கு கிளை மூன்றிரண்டாம்
குரையா உழையிளி நான்கு — விரையா
விளரியெனின் மூன்றிரண்டு தாரமெனச்
சொன்னார் களரிசேர் கண்ணுற் றவர்"

— அரும்பதவுரை ஆசிரியர் உரை

imparts to each, a distinctive quality and status. There is a plenitude of material in the *Silapathikaram* on these musical scales. I am deliberately refraining from embarking on any reference to them, as that is the special subject of a paper at this Conference, by Sangita Bushanam Sri S. Ramanathan, who has done a life-time study of it and is especially competent to make that analysis. I shall be content to make a few remarks for the sake of completeness of this topic. Parent scales, employing all the seven notes in both ascent and descent, are the *panns* properly so called. Sextatonic, pentatonic and even quadratonic scales were also known to the ancient Tamils. These were known as the *thirams.*[19] The total number of musical scales has been fixed at 11,991 in an old verse.[20] I need hardly add that this is neither a mathematically derived number, nor a musically well established one. It would rather appear to give the idea that modes or *ragas* in modern language, are legion. Well worth further research are the inscriptions, in the Kudimiyamalai temple in Tiruchi District, which may shed light on a lost period.

The number of *panns* or major parent scales has been fixed at 103. In current Karnatic musical theory, the number of parent ragas is 72. We need not here attempt to reconcile the two, and indeed it is my view, which I shall develop later, that such reconciliation or analogy is not necessary.

Musical Faults

I think I may here refer, in a digression, to a passage from a mediaeval work called *Thiruvilayadal puranam.* This should be of interest, particularly to those who cannot help being dismayed by the gesticulations, grimaces and other mannerisms of musicians. In this passage, a free translation of which I am giving below, the author has listed certain physical faults which should be avoided by musicians, while singing. Some of our contemporary musicians can possibly claim on this authority to be in the great company of the ancients, when contorting their bodies! Apart from

19. " *நிறை நரம் பிற்றே பண்ணெலாகும்*
குறை நரம் பிற்றே திறமெனப்படுமே " --*Divakaram*

20. " *இசையாவது நரப்படைவால் உரைக்கப்பட்ட*
பதினோராயிரத்து தொள்ளாயிரத்துத் தொண்ணூற்
றொன்றாகிய ஆதி இசைகள் " — *அரும்பதவுரையாசிரியர் உரை*

this interesting aspect, this passage also reveals the extent to which there had been critical appreciation of public performances. The author says:

"Drawing one's stomach in, displaying a mournful face, knitting one's eye-brows, adopting a tremulous voice, allowing one's throat to get prominently inflamed, opening one's mouth wide, baring one's teeth—these are faults (while singing)".[21]

Patrons of Ancient Tamil Musicians

Musicians of ancient days were patronised by the rulers of the day, as well as by lesser nobles and chieftains. They would exhibit their prowess individually as well as in friendly challenges between competing artists for royal favour, which was not uncommon. The ones who pleased the patron most would receive among other gifts, a lotus flower made of gold. This practice has been rightly equated to the modern practice of awarding gold medals to artists, whom it is intended to honour. The picture of an itinerant musician going about with several instruments hanging from him on all sides was likened in an old poem to a jack-fruit tree with its many fruits dangling on all sides![22] While the artists were honoured from time to time, they were also obliged to travel a lot in search of recognition and reward and were not free from poverty. A line in the *Perum Pannarrupadai* says the *panars* accompanied by hungry families wandered about like birds in search of nourishment.[23]

That the ancient Tamil musicians were treated with honour and respect by kings and chieftains emerges very clearly from ancient Tamil works. Banquets in their honour were not rare. The *Pathu pattu* or Ten Idylls is a valuable Sangam work, and it

21. "வயிறது குழிய வாங்கல் அழுமுகங் காட்டல் வாங்கும்
செயிராறு புருவ மேறல் சிர நடுக் குறல் கண்ணோடல்
பயிறரு மிடறு வீங்கல் பையென வாயங் காத்தல்
ஏயிறது காட்டலின்ன உடற்றொழிர் குற்ற மென்ப"
— திருவிளையாடல் புராணம்

22. See Dr. U. V. S. Iyer, *Nallurai Kovai*, Vol. 3, page 88.

23 "பழுமரந் தேரும் பறவை போலக்
கல்லென் சுற்றமொடு கால் கிளர்ந்து திரிதரும்"
—*Perum Pannarrupadai*, lines 20-21.

refers to these conferences of poets and musicians. Four out of the ten idylls deal with such artists.

There is an account in the *Porunar Attrupadai,* of the reception given to the bards by the Chola Emperor Karikalan. I cannot resist the temptation of reproducing a free translation of the lines in this ancient work, which recaptures the spacious days of yore, when art flourished and artists were honoured in an atmosphere of freedom and gaiety.[24]

The following is the description of this reception and I am adopting gratefully the free translation of a learned author, Sri Kothandapani Pillai: —

> "The bards enter the palace undetained by the guards. The monarch receives them in audience and asks them to take their seats close to him. His loveable speech and endearing looks make even the bones of these bards melt with emotion. Beautiful, sweet smiling, well adorned ladies of the palace serve them with drinks (wines) in cups of gold, full to the brim, as often as they are emptied. The bards drink fully and forget the fatigue of their long journey. They are asked to stay in a part of the palace itself. The heralds are ordered to fetch the bards in and the king himself leads them to the banquet. Exquisite soup in which haunches of pure fed sheep have been cooked tender is served and the bards are coaxed to a sumptuous repast. Roasts of fat meat are served hot in plenty even to surfeit. This is followed by delicious sweets of tempting varieties in numerous shapes, which the bards partake and prolong the lunch. Feasting and revelry go on for many days in the palace".[25]

One wonders in what shape the artists would have been after this bacchanalian orgy, to regale their royal host with any worthwhile music. But it speaks volumes about the hospitality offered to poets and artists. It has been observed that these accounts may be a trifle exaggerated as poets expecting the bounty of a king are likely to lay it on with a trowel when extolling his virtues.

24. *Porunar Attrupadai,* lines 67 to 111.
25. See *Tamil Culture,* Volume VII, page 33 at pp. 43-45.

Read with the moving passage in the *Perum Panarrupadai* mentioned earlier, this is quite likely. Even so, this early work does give us some idea of the free atmosphere that prevailed and the comparative informality of the proceedings..

The Saiva Revival

As started earlier, the Dark Age intervened between two glorious epochs in Tamil history. The high standard of the music of the Sangam Era was matched only by the glorious revival during the period of the great Saivite Saints, who among them, contributed the hymns that have been compiled in the Canons or *Thirumurais,* including the *Thevaram* (of Appar, Sundarar and Sambandar) and the *Tiruvachagam* (of Manicka Vachagar). These *Thirumurais* or Canons have been the subject of recent research, thanks to the encouragement of the Annamalai University and the Tamil Isai Sangam. The history of these Tamil lyrical hymns which were set to music has been published by Vidvan K. Vellai Varanan of the Tamil Research Department of the Annamalai University and is a valuable contribution to modern musical and religious literature. The *Thirumurais* came to be first compiled during the time of a Chola King. These divine utterances of three famous Saiva Saints—Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar—had not been collected and compiled until an inspired Nambi Andar Nambi accepted the commission of a Chola King and the work was thoroughly done. Recent research has established that this Thirumuraikanda Cholan lived in the 9th Century A.D. and his name was Adityan. The musical setting of the *Thirumurai* is ascribed by tradition to a *padini* (female musician) belonging to the family of the famous Thiruneelakanta Yazhpanar. The biographical particulars of the Saiva Saints, highly interesting as they are and, to a devoutly receptive mind filled with thrilling experiences, do not immediately concern us here. But in an endeavour to understand the contributions made by the Tamil Saiva Saints to music, it should not be forgotten that theirs was primarily a religious and always spontaneous outpouring of highly evolved souls. While they may have created musical modes and even contributed in no mean degree to the grammar of music, it was not their intention to provide material for the musicologists of the nuclear age. I feel that this is important to bear in mind.

The poetry of the really ancient Tamils of the Sangam Era with which were closely connected their other arts, including music, can be best understood by considering their social setting. They were basically a pleasure-loving and contented people. They were known either for their valour in battle or for the tenderness of their love and they lived a simple care-free life, as works like the *Kalithogai* or *Narrinai* indicate.[26] It is only in the mediaeval period, i.e. after the dark ages, that there is a distinct pre-occupation with the soul, and a constant and unsatisfied yearning for communion with God. We are not here concerned with the reasons for this religious revival. But the tremendous output of religious hymns in the *Thirumurais* was surely meeting a great public demand. I am personally unable to imagine that the musical modes themselves and the manner of musical rendering and appreciation would not have undergone drastic and possibly even fundamental changes during these times. The music of the free and happy hunter or shepherd with no thought but that of meeting his love, cannot have been cast in the same mould as the music of the saint, clad in sack cloth and ashes, whose primary concern was a fervent plea for Divine Mercy and Grace for himself and his people.

There is this gap, to my mind unsatisfactorily if at all bridged by any authentic sources of knowledge, between the early Sangam and the mediaeval period of the *thirumurais.* There is equally another gap between the mediaeval period namely, the time of the Saiva Saints and the 17th Century, when the now famous musical Trinity thrived in Thanjavur. While the Trinity had as much concern with God, as the great Saiva Saints, and were equally singing His praise, they were nevertheless more or less involved in the complexity of the *grahastha* or day to day life. If we keep these factors in mind, we can readily appreciate the formal and structural differences that must exist among the music of the three great periods. In this view, I feel that great as the endeavour is to understand the music of our ancients, searching for an analogy in modern music is profitless and possibly dange-

26. See *Tamil Culture,* Vol. V, No. 1 at page 14.
—(*Fr. Xavier Thaninayagam's Article*).

rously misleading. Even if the same musical notes were employed by the *Panars* of the Sangam period, as by the Tamil Saint Sundarar, as by Thyagaraja in the Seventeenth Century, it would be incorrect to assume that the music produced by all the three must have been set in the same or analagous ragas or modes. The fact that the notes employed in some of the ancient *panns* can be recognised and identified with reference to their modern counterparts does not mean that what was sung then bore any resemblance to what is being sung now. And why need there be any? Musical creativity as well as musical appreciation have a lot to do with the social background of the time. Identification by analogy is always dangerous. It is true there are likely to be some overlapping areas but this is accidental.

The *Thirumurais* offer immense scope for musical research, I agree. The pathigams or hymns have been set to music, and the wealth of *panns* that will emerge on a closer study cannot be imagined. Fortunately there are available in Tamil Nad today, quite a few musicians who have learnt these songs traditionally. Tamil scholars there are in plenty, who can, by discussion with these musicians, relate earlier texts to the prevalent music. In fact, a great deal of good work in this direction is being done annually at the Pann Research Conference held under the auspices of the Tamil Isai Sangham at Madras. But if I may observe with due respect, I do not see the need for straining every nerve to derive analogies to Karnatic Music. We can easily imagine that for some centuries at least, in Tamil Nad, the ancient Tamil *Panns* as employed by the Saiva Saints (though not those referred to in the literature of the Sangam era) existed side by side with Karnatic Music. Their types of appeal were different; their places of performance were different. But they must have quite unconsciously been influencing each other. That they were kept distinct is an accident of social history, to which we must be thankful. Fortunately we can today look at the issue free of prejudice, and with no need to establish priorities or the superiority of the one over the other. It is my hope that in our generation at least, contemporary concerts will invariably have two parts, one devoted to Karnatic Music and the other to Ancient Tamil Music. For this, their distinctness must be maintained, and my fear is that too great a search for analogy may destroy that very 'otherness'

which is the gift of our ancients to posterity. Research on the other hand must try to restore the purity of the *panns,* and erase if possible, the effects of other influences. I have the greatest regard for Karnatic music, and I am myself trained in it. That is why I am keen that we should not confuse the issue, and seek to establish any great unity or affinity between the two great systems of music that we have the honour and privilege to inherit. It is the very distinction of each that is its beauty. I implore research workers to re-orient if possible their line of work, so that we may cherish and enjoy a twin heritage, and not lose both in an insensible amalgam.

I cannot close better than by referring to the ancient bird "*Asunam*" referred to in our old literature. It was so sensitive to music, that hunters would play the harp till it stood enthralled by the sounds and suddenly jam a discordant note, which would shock the poor bird to instant death.[27] Let us remember that the ancient Tamils alone had the *Asunam.* Have we killed that sensitive bird and extinguished its very species, by our meaningless cacophony and cadenced callisthenics?

27. *அசுணங் கொல்பவர் கைபோல், நன்றும்,*
இன்பமும் துன்பமும் உடைத்தே.
தன் கமழ் நறுந்தார் விரலோன் மார்பே —
— *நற்றிணை* 304 —lines 8-10.
— *மாற்றோகத்து நப்பசலையார்*

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The Translation of Cankam Literature

J. R. MARR

One of the problems in translation work is that of what I might term the relevance of the translation, both in diction and subject-matter, to the language-ethos of the tongue into which the translation is made. By language-ethos I mean the spirit that informs a given language at any particular time as seen in both style of writing and literary form on the one hand and in the acceptability of any given subject matter on the other.

Thus, translations of what we in the West regard as Classical Literature were in a sense a mirror of the English language of the day. The prose of Gibbon was no more periodic than that of Cicero; the latter was indeed stylistically relevant to the former. This was of little consequence in an age wherein, among the wholly literate at least, a classics education was an assumed adornment of the educated man. That such people were in a minority was an irrelevance in a society such as ours, semi-literate till the advent of compulsory schooling in the 1870's. It was they who, to use a dreadful contemporary idiom, were the trend-setters of the language.

But familiarity with the Classics can no longer be assumed, and even the stories in them are retold by such writers as Nathaniel Hawthorne[1] are probably less familiar than they were. It has become necessary for a whole new body of, to us, very readable translations and 'racy' historical novels to appear. As an example of the latter we may cite Robert Graves: *I, Claudius,* probably one of the earliest in what has become a flood of writing.[2]

1. Natheniel Hawthorne: *Tanglewood Tales.* First published in 1853. London, Nelson Classics. n.d.

2. Robert Graves: *I, Claudius.* First published, London 1934. London, Penguin Books, 1 Vol. edn., 1953.

English is highly evolutionary, and translation has had to evolve too. Thus, while the Victorians did not mind "fillets" as a rendering of the braided hair of Homeric ladies, to our ears in the sixties the word is suggestive of fish, prepared without bones for the table.

It is doubtful whether we can now read, without exasperation, the following:

"The matrons of Phylace gather about, and cry to me: 'Put on thy royal robes, Laodamia! 'Shall I, then, go clad in stuffs that are saturate with costly purple, while my lord goes warring under the walls of Ilion? Am I to dress my hair, while his head is weighed down by the helm? Am I to wear new apparel while my lord wears hard and heavy arms? In what I can, they shall say I imitate your toils — in rude attire; and these times of war I will pass in gloom."[3]

Our exasperation, I submit, is not with the subject-matter, common enough in a romantic tale, but with the diction. However irrelevant the fashionable hold latinity to be to education in Britain, there is no need to make such heavy weather of a translation.

One of the most graphic of Pattuppaṭṭu is *Neṭunalvāṭai* and one of its most picturesque descriptions of the wet weather culminates in the passage about the bedraggled pigeons of the rooftops:

"மனையுறை புறவின் ...... இருப்பு"[4]

But can we be anything but impatient with;

"Confused as to day or night, the domestic pigeons do not go out in search of food with their mates, but remain dull on the ridge-boards of houses now on one leg then on the other to relieve the strain."[5]

3. P. Ovidius Naso: *Heroides and Amores.* With an English Translation by Grant Showerman. Loeb. Edition , first printed 1914. Reprinted, London, 1963.

passage quoted: *Heroides* XIII, 11.35-42 tr. *ibid.,* p. 161.

4. *Netunalvatai,* lines 45-48.

5. J. M. Somasundaram: *Two Thousand Years of Tamil Literature,* Madras, 1959, p. 105.

Hilaire Belloc once said that the business of a translator is not to ask: "How shall I make this foreigner talk English?" but "What would an Englishman have said to express this?"[6] How not to translate was perhaps best summed up in an amusing way by Ronald Know; writing about the Douai or Challenor translation of the Bible:

"But when the Latin had 'Renew a right spirit within my bowels', that was what Challenor put; and when the Latin had 'Examine, O Lord, my kidneys', Challenor put that down too; only he changed kidneys to the obsolete word 'reins', hoping that his readers would not look it up in the dictionary."

If language is relevant to translation in the 20th century in order that it may appeal to the general reader and not merely, as a crib, to the specialist, emphasis, I suggest, is no less so. One of the difficulties in translating Cankam literature is that most clauses are really dependent upon one central idea, both syntactically and in subject-matter. However, in the matter of word-order, this idea very often comes right at the end.

Paṭṭinappālai is a good illustration of this. The essence of the poem is that the poet makes a choice between all the splendour of the Coḻa town and his loved one, and decides in her favour. But it is doubtful whether the modern reader, unless he was acquainted with the conventions of Akam poetry, would appreciate that *Paṭṭinappālai* is in fact a love-poem. In 301 lines, Uruttiran-kaṇṇaṉār only reveals his sentiment twice, in lines 218-9 and in 300-1. Should we just ignore the point, and treat the poem as a brilliant piece of description, a compliment to the author's Coḻa patron, a propaganda poem if you like that we know was well-rewarded?

No, I suggest we accept modern directness and, dispensing with the original order, start by putting our translation of lines 218-9 serve to separate the descriptive part of the poem from the ensuing praises of Karikalvaḷavaṉ which, in the same way, are rounded off by lines 300-1, the second Akam 'aside'. The solution, I think,

6. in a lecture at the Taylorian in 1931.
7. Mgr. Ronald Knox: *On Englishing the Bible*, London, 1949, p. 7.

is to place the translation of these latter lines in the position in the whole that would have been occupied by that of ll. 218-20.

The relevant portions of translation, of lines 1-7, 218-20; 300–1 and 220 et seqq. would appear as follows:

"Though the silvery planet that is without blemish may change course and go southward, though the gathering clouds disperse so that the bird that longs for raindrops grieves, the Kaviri that rises in the hills does not fail, but spreads its waters even to the sea.

"Yet, were the city of Pukar itself bestowed upon me, I would not be parted from my beloved of the dark spreading tresses and fine ornaments. Rejoice, heart of mine'.

"The river washes particles of gold, and its broad fields are always fertile...."

and:

"Yet the soft broad shoulders of my beloved are cooler than the sway of Tirumavaḷavan, and the forests more cruel than his spear.

"As the cub of the sharp-clawed striped tiger, though held captive, grows, so does the king's valour, even though he was imprisoned by his enemies". — and so on.

What of the relevance of the subject-matter of Cankam literature to contemporary taste in English? It is here that, of all Tamil writing up to the most recent, the secular Cankam poetry has the most to offer the non-specialist reader. It is probably fair to say that, mystical poetry (as relating an experience) apart, there is something of a recession of interest in religious writing, especially in relation to dogma and apologetics. A translation of *Civagnanapotam,* then, is likely to have a limited appeal only, to scholars and missionaries for instance. Much other religious literature in Tamil is so full of Puranic material as to be unreadable without constant reference to footnotes. But Cankam literature, treating of matters of common experience, has an immediate appeal even in a language that has not been preconditioned to accept it.

I have in mind the way that much writing in English had a 'classical pedigree' in some form analogous to the matter of diction mentioned earlier. An obvious example is Milton's *Lycidas,*

published in 1638. A lament on the death by drowning of his friend Edward King, this poem owes a good deal to Vergil's IXth. Eclogue, while the lines:

> "Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
> Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?"[8]
> are almost a translation of the line of Theocritus:[9]
> "πᾶ ποk' ἄρ' ησθ', okα Δαφνιs ε'ᵀλkετο, πᾶ πekα Νυμφ'αι"

wherein Thyrsis is bewailing the death of Daphnis.

But, in addition to Homer another classical praise-poets, Bardic literature has in general appealed to English readers. Even *Gilgamesh* exists in paperback format[10] though its graphic flood episode, with its obvious biblical echoes, in part perhaps accounts for this.[11] The bardic poetry of *Puṟanāṉuṟu* and *Patiṟṟuppattu* should present few difficulties in translation.[12]

When we come to consider Akam poetry we come to the fact that, for the average reader, love-poetry in English means the poetry of actual experience of such writers as Byron, Shelly and Keats. The characters were real people, and even in our day we can feel their lives through their writing Lady Caroline Lamb's veritable siege of poor Byron really happened and, in her passionate intensity, she is as real today as when she lived.

In this scene, it is difficult to make the formal characters of Akam poetry 'live"; the Talaivaṉ, Toḻi and the rest are stock characters, anonymous by the very rules of the rhetoric.[13] Tolkappiyaṉar states:

மக்கள் நுதலிய அகன் ஐந்திணையும்
சுட்டி ஒருவர்ப் பெயர்கொளப் பெறுஅர்

8. John Milton: *Lycidas,* lines 50-51. In Milton's Minor Poems, Oxford, 1938.

9. Theocritus: *Idyll* I, 66.

10. N. K. Sandars: *The Epic of Gilgamesh,* London, Penguin Classics, 1960.

11. *Ibid.,* Chapter V, pp. 105 & seqq.

12. In his comprehensive study of bardic literature *Heroic Poetry,* Sir Maurice Bowra excluded the Indian epics as they were overlaid with literary and theological matter. He presumably had in mind Sanskrit works such as Mahabharata and Ramayana. See Bowra, M.: *Heroic Poetry,* London, 1964, paperback edition, preface, p. v.

13. *Tolkappiyam,* Akattinai, cu. 57.

The most one can do, according to Ilampuranar,[14] is to refer to the hero as Nāṭaṉ, Ūraṉ or Cārppaṉ, as lord of the tract of land appropriate to the aspect of love being described. It is probably better to forget the rather cold-blooded prescriptions in Tolkappiyam about who may speak, and when,[15] if one seeks a purely reading pleasure in the Akam poems. It is perfectly possible to derive great enjoyment, for instance, from Peyaṉar's decade in *Ainkuṟunuṟu*[16] wherein the foster-mother lovingly describes the hero, his wife and child, without unduly worrying that this decade occurs in the century on Mullai, the patience in separation of the beloved.

In some aspects, notably Palai, the separation of lovers that is likened to the desert's burning heat, and the two aspects of love that are, cavalierly perhaps, put on one side by the theorists: Kaikkiḷai or unrequited love and Peruntiṉai, forced love, Akam poetry seems to approach both poetry of experience and the courtly poetry of medieval Europe. It shares the natures of our two main streams of love poetry, though, in its resemblance to the medieval, it nowhere approaches it in the sense of cruel servitude, even in the convention of riding the palmyra-palm horse, *Maṭal ēṟutal.* And distinguished by the term Akam, Inner, from the praise-poetry that is Puṟam, Outer, it observes a difference between private and public that would not have been very meaningful to the troubadours and their successors, but one which is quite acceptable to us. Archibald MacLeish writes that:

"There was no distinction between public world and private world so far as the meanings of poetry were concerned down to the time we live in.."[17]

But Palai, separation's pangs, and the aspects that seem to stem from it: Mullai, patience in separation and Neytal, weeping in separation, put us in mind not only of Caroline Lamb's plight,

14. Ilam. on the above. Madras, Saiva Siddhanta, 1952, p. 71.

15. e.g. Tol. Akat. cu. 36-43, listing those characters entitled to speak during Palai, or as causes thereof.

16. *Ainkuṟuṉūṟu* V, Mullai, vv. 401-410.

17. Archibald MacLeish: *Poetry and Experience.* Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 110.

but of one of the 12th century definitions of the romantic, *l'Amor de Lonh,** love at a distance; the sentiment was held to the aggravated by distance.

Akam poetry, then, recalls perhaps the medieval and vernacular part of our European heritage, rather than the classical (with the exception of Sappho); it is nowhere so frivolous as Ovid's *Ars Amatoria,* for instance. We cannot but be moved by the plaint in *Kalittokai*:

"Consuming my soul with insupportable desire, so young are you that you realize it not'. No fault is it of yours. O say that it is not wrong that you have excelled in loveliness those around you who are conscious of your beauty that makes lovesick the very one who would avoid it.

"Every day your poise has afflicted me with love, but too childlike are you to realise this. No fault is it of yours, but say, if you can, that it is no fault either that you have made jealous for their own looks those around you who have perceived your loveliness and the slenderness of your waist."[18]

Though Kapilar's poem appears in Kuṛinji the poem was taken by the commentator Naccinarkkiniyar as depicting Kaikkilai, unrequited love.

It finds in Europe a ready echo in the 15th century *Villancico* of Enrique: *Mi quēre tanto vos Quiere*:

"So sharp is my desire, sweet lady, and my pain,
I feel my life expire yet dare not to complain,
So deeply loved you are by me, with tender care,
That I can nothing say, when you my will deny.

I cannot but obey,
If sharp is my desire your beauty is to blame.
I feel my life expire yet dare not to complain."[19]

*(L'amour de loin ... ? ... *Ed.*)

18. Kalittokai 58, lines 7-14. J.R.M. tr.

19. Enrique: Mi querer. Nigel Glendinning tr. Barcelona, Ars, Musicae, 1961.

Suggestions to Research Schools and Lexicographers in Tamil and Dravidology

H. S. DAVID

(*Continued from Page* 12, *Vol.* 12, *No.* 1, *Jan.-Mar.* 1966)

Next let us apply the *second* rule to this. We must search for words ending in "l" here. The word "vaḷ-ai" signifies "to bend". But there is another word, which so far has no etymology but which I am persuaded belongs semantically to this group of words. Observe carefully how a generous Tamilian gentleman bestows gifts or alms on the poor and how often he *bends low* towards the recipient. This is a beautiful Tamil custom. Recall to mind the advice of Swāmi Kumārakuruparar to the rich in NNV. 16 already cited above, "*தலை வணங்கித் தாழப்பெறின்,*" in the last line. Finally, remember the *first* rule: *From the physical to the metaphysical.* We may then assume that "vaḷḷ-ai" (= a very generous person, a beneficent lord or baron, like Pāri, Ōri, Pēkaṉ, Malaiyaṉ etc.) has its origin in this accompanying gesture of *"bending low"* in courtesy to their numerous recipients. In them was verified to the very letter this *"desideratum"* of Kumārakuruparar in NNV. 37:—

கண்ணோக்கு அரும்பா நகைமுகமே நாண்மலரா
இன்மொழியின் வாய்மையே தீங்காயா — வண்மை
பலமா நலங்கனிந்த பண்புடையார் அன்றே
சலியாத கற்ப தரு.

Let the reader study the word "vaṇmai" in this elegantly-expressed context.

Note the word *"vaḷ-um-ai" > *"vaṇmai"*, a cousin of "vaṇ-aṅku", "vaṇ-akkam, vaṇṭu", already discussed by me. Taken in conjunction with "valai", it is quite clear that "vaḷ" — is the primary root for this group of words.

The 2nd. Word-root and its groups uḷ = in. This is an adverbial root.

Let us now take another word, with "ḷ" as the final letter of a monosyllabic base: "uḷ" (= in). The nearest substantive to this is uḷḷam (= the mind, the interior of men). The particle "untu" played a very important role in the Tamil of the first three centuries after Christ, as is evidenced by the numerous times it occurs in the Puṟanāṉūṟu poems. Look up Section 7 H below. Just as English "number" and "timber" are found in the sister-tongue, German, as "Nummer" and "Zimmer" (= a timber-partitioned room, now) so the old Tamil *"untu"* is found in Malayalam of the present day as "unnu", e.g., "pōyunnu". Confer Section 8 below. Another Dravidian sister-tongue, Telugu, has the shorter form "unu" e.g., koṭṭ-unu, which is found in the Future-Aorist tense, which A. H. Arden, in his Progressive Grammar of the Telugu Language, Madras, 1927, page 100 etc., calls "Indefinite Tense". In the paradigm on page 98, he gives us the 1st pers. s. "koṭṭudunu".

Thus in the Singular, 3rd pers. m. Vāḍu koṭṭ-unu = he would have struck.

Thus in the Singular, 3rd pers. f. & n. adi koṭṭ unu = she or it would have struck.

Likewise in the plural 3rd pers. neuter, avi koṭṭ unu = they would have struck.

Let the reader make a note of the ending "unu" in each case.

My hypothesis is that we have traces of this particle in the nasalization of the penultimate letter in such finite verbs as uṇṭu, aṉṟu etc. and in such absolutives, called in Tamil "viṉai eccam", as Koṉṟu, koṇṭu, in this wise:—al (Cf. allatu, ala) + untu >* alntu > aṉṟu.

(For the reference, see below on page 11 of this essay).
Similarly I give analogous forms paradigmatically:—
Uḷ + untu >* ulntu > uṇṭu.
Ḳol + untu >* Kolntu > Koṉṟu.
Koḷ + untu >* Kolntu > Koṇṭu Now let us take three positions:
1 2 3 The positions are shown here diagrammatically.

For the first position, we have the testimony of PN. Confer Section 7 H below. For the second position kindly see what I have written above about the frequent elison of "u". Confer Sections 1 and 2 above. The third position is that of the Mod. Tam. words. Uṇṭu̲ is mostly employed as a verb, meaning "there *is in*"; but at one stage it was employed as a noun as well. Take, for instance, the first stanza of Nālaṭi, which gives us "uṇ" as well.

அறுசுவை உண்டி அமர்ந்துஇல்லாள் ஊட்ட
மறுசிகை நீக்கி உண்டாரும்— வறிஞராய்ச்
சென்றிரப்பர் ஓரிடத்தில் கூழெனிற் செல்வமொன்று
உண்டு ஆக வைக்கற்பாற்று அன்று.

In his commentary hereon, G. U. Pope [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1893] writes thus:—

"Oṉṟu uṇṭu āka = as though it were *anything* (real). Here "uṇṭu" means a real thing, a lasting reality. A reminiscence of this old nominal usage can be traced in the modern Tamil phrase, employed mainly by Christians, "uṇṭakku". e.g. *கடவுள் மண்ணுல் மனிதனை உண்டாக்கினர். தீர்த்தம் இங்கு உண்டாக்கு எனச் செப்பலோடும்,* M. L. sub voce. *சர்வ வல்லப கடவுள் வானத்தையும் பூமியையும் ஒன்றுமில்லாமையிலிருந்து உண்டாக்கினர்* = The omnipotent God fashioned the reality of (= created) heaven and earth out of nothing. Etymologically "uṇṭu" = the *inner* reality.

Very few groups of Tamil words show how scientifically Tamil has been built up as this. Round this primary or basic root "uḷ" were formed the verbs "uṇṭu, uṇ and uṇar". The first we have just discussed: its central idea is "to be *in*". The second and third have the central idea of "taking *in*", the second *physically* and the third *mentally*. This sequence is another instance of my first rule: from the concrete to the abstract, from the *physical* to the metaphysical, the *mental* or the moral senses. As "uṇ" is structurally simpler and earlier than "uṇ-ar", *this building up of these two words* once again proves the validity of my first rule: *"from* the physical *to* the moral, mental, spiritual or metaphysical." From "uṇ" (= to eat) are formed the nouns "uṇṭi" (Nālla), "uṇa" (Paḷamoḷi 85 d) and "uṇavu" (ibidem). From uṇar (= to assimilate mentally) is formed "uṇarcci" or "uṇarvu" (= full perception), a prime requisite of the Tamil wise man, the "cāṉṟōṉ". From

ūṇ (= food), [Paḷamoḻi 99 c, 101 c], another variant of "uṇā, uṇavu", which are found plentifully in ancient texts like paḻamoḻi Nāṉūṟu (Tamil Culture, IX, 2, Page 157, No. 16), is formed the *causative* ūṭṭu (= to cause to eat, to feed), already cited: *amarntu* illāḷ *ūtta* = while his seated wife *feeds* him. This verb is widely employed later on as well, at Naḷa Veṇpa, for instance, in the stanza which starts with the words: cītamati-k-kuṭai-k-kīḻ Cf. Naḷaṉ Caritam by A. C. Sundararajan, B.A., page 4. The third line of this stanza, along with the taṉi-c-col in line 2 are: mātar aruku ūṭṭum Painkiḷiyum.... I have thus divided the தொடர்மொழி arukūṭṭum. The word is "aruku + ūṭṭum". The commentary states: Peṇkaḷ arukil iruntu ūṭṭukiṉṟa paciya kiḷiyum...

§ 5. *The true role of Adjectives*

The presence of "al" in Paḻamoḻi 23 a not, as is normally the case, as part of a verb of negation, but as a full word, and that an adjective, brings us to *the third rule*: Search for the *roots* of Tamil words not only nominal and verbal but also *adjectival* or *adverbial,* which are lumped together as uri-c-col, in Tamil grammars, starting with Tolkāppiyam, Coll-atikāram. Here the author gives us the first Tamil lexicon or glossary, somewhat in the form of the Sanskrit "nighaṇṭu" and deals mainly with "uriccol" and nouns of a still earlier time, giving them the meaning of his own time.

The study not only of *adjectives* and *adverbs* but of such *roots* as are basic to them has been neglected by many modern grammarians and etymologists: it is to remedy this that I have laid stress thereon by enunciating my third rule on this point. Kamil Zvelebil too has complained of this defect.

In Tamil Culture, Vol. X, 2, page 103, he thus speaks of M. S. Andronoy's "Survey of Grammatical Structure": "Gosudarstvennoe izdatel 'stvo inostrannych nationalnych slovarej": "Unfortunately adjectives have been entirely omitted, or rather ignored, as if they did not exist at all. This conception has partly crept into the text of the dictionary too. In spite of the fact that Tamil, like all Dravidian languages, has got *quite a number of original* adjective-stems, the Tamil-Russian Dictionary (of Pjatigorskij and Rudin) follows sometimes, in this respect, the unfortunate practice of the Tamil Lexicon, which ignores adjectives as such with

a stubborn consequentiality. Fortunately this is not always the case". The "uriccol" should play a more important role in future lexicons, whether in Tamil Nāḍ or abroad. Often they are more basic to Dravidian morphology than the corresponding nominal or verbal forms. Thus "nal" is more fundamental than "nanri" (a noun) or naṉṟu (= it is good, a verb). Likewise "al" is more basic than "aṉṟu."[1]

§ 6. *A few other words, studied semantically and morphologically. The 3rd word-root and its group*: kēḷ, kēḷir, keṇmai.

The noun "kēḻ" "= a relative", "kith & kin", is connected with "keḻu" = "peruntu" = "be united with or related to". This is one of the few old Tamil words that form their plural with the particle "ir" like "makaḷ, puttēḷ, vēḷ." Look up supplementary note 2. The plural form "kēḷir" occurs very often in the Kuṟuntokai, generally with the descriptive "peyar eccam" "*itikkum*"; the reference is to the fault-finding comrades of the princely or plebeian lover. Without this descriptive adjunct, it occurs in the famous first line of Puṟa Nāṉūṟu 192, which sums up the essential cosmopolitanism of the ancient Tamil people which aided them as travellers or settlers anywhere:—

யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்.

For the English translation of this line and a short exposition of this theme by Dr. S. X. Thani Nayagam, look up "Tamil Culture", Vol. X, 3, Page 20. Nalaṭi too employs this term fairly often, as at 9 b *துன் அருங் கேளிர் துயர் களையான்.* Now let me explain at some length the origin of "kēṇmai."

N.B.—In Tōlkāppiyam "eṉum" is a variant of "eṉṉum", but when other suffixes are added on to "en-um", as "aṉ-ār", the resultant is "eṉmaṉār". The clause "eṉmaṉār pulavar" = "the learned say this" is found quite frequently in its "Eḻuttu" section, in proportion to the lines of which this part consists, and less often in the other two sections, proportionately. Look up supplementary Note 3, towards its close.

1. Note the two adjectives "al" and 'nal' in Pal. 23 ab:—

அல் அவையுட் தோன்றி அலஅலைத்து வாழ்பவர்
நல் அவையுள்..........

Similarly, when the suffixes "um + ai" were added on to "kēḷ", the resultant, "kēḷ-um-ai" syncopated into "kēṇmai", just as the homonym "kēḷ (= to hear) + um + iṉ" syncopated into "kēḷmiṉ". Look up "Tamil Culture" Vol. IX, 2 Pages 174 to 176. In Section 2, I have already quoted a Nālaṭi stanza, in the first line of which "kēṇmai", occurs, namely Nāl. -25 a periyavar kēṇ-mai = the friendship of the great.

The 4th. Word-root and its group: koḷ = to receive, take.

Even the disyllabic verb "koṭu" (= to give) has been interpreted by some etymologists as the causative of the simple verb "koḷ" (= to receive). Thus "koṭu" would basically signify "to cause some one else to receive". If this hypothesis is accepted, this would be another instance to prove the validity of my second rule, given on Page 234 under Section 4 above. The occurrence frequently of the alternate forms "koḷḷutal and* koḷtal > kōṭal", both meaning "receiving" would strengthen the hypothesis which traces "koṭu" from "koḷ". Let me cite a few instances:—

(a) ataṉiṟ kōṭal (கோடல்) at Tol. Col. Vērr. 13, i.e., Col. 74 c.

(b) பல் ஆவுள் உய்த்து விடினுங் குழக்கன்று
வல்லதாம் தாய் நாடிக் கோடலே.

Although you send forth the tender calf amid many cows, it has unerring skill to seek out its own mother. Nālaṭi 101. Whereas "kōṭal" is "centamiḻ" or "ilakkiyattamiḻ", "koḷḷutal" is the term now employed in the standard colloquial Tamil of the present age.

The 5th Word-root and its groups: kiḻ = down.

Here note that the root is neither a noun nor a verb. Cf. my Rule 3. A. There is a well-known alternance in Dravidian: it has been discussed in several papers contained in the BSOAS (Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies). According to this alternance the words "kēḻ", "keḻu" are basically the same as "kiḻa". In fact, all these three words connote "ownership". Thus kiḻavōṉ, kiḻār = lord, master, Latin "dominus". The word *"kiḻamai"* originally denoted the day that mankind devoted or referred up, as the special day, to the Sun or to the Moon and to the planets visible to the naked eye, in that order. It was only

at a later stage that "kil̲amai" came to denote the *weekly* combination of these seven days. The basic meaning is "proprietorship", as in "tar̲kil̲amai" in Grammar.

B. The same alternance, combined with my Rule 2, would make one see the origin of "kēṭu" (= downfall) in "kīl̲ (= down), just as "kēṇi" (= a dug-out pool) and "kiṇar̲u" (= well) originate from "kiṇṭu" (= to dig).

Here I must give a warning to future lexicographers. Just as "kil̲amai" in the sense of "week" is late, as I have just shown above, so "kīl̲" in "kīl̲tticai" or kil̲akku" in the sense *"the east"* is late, very late indeed. This sense could arise only when the old Cera kingdom or Kēraḷa nāṭu was lost to the Tamil speech, i.e., after the complete separation of Malayalam from Tamil. It was only them that a Tamilian, who stood on one of the Kun̲n̲ūr hills or at Mettupalayam plateau, saw the range of lofty mountains raising *up* to the *west* beyond which was an alien land and the land steadily sloping *down* to the *east* coast. It was only then that "mēl" or "mēr̲ku", which originally meant *"up"* began to acquire the new connotation of "west" and that "kil" or "kilakku" started to be employed in the sense of east. No two historians will give the same date for the split of Malayalam from Tamil: but one would not be far wrong in placing it between the seventh and eighth centuries after Christ. Hence any text in Tamil which employs either of these two sets of words in the sense of direction, west or east, is by that very fact to be relegated to a century after the sixth or seventh A.D.

Note: The words for the 4 directions in the first 4 lines of PN 6.—"vaṭakkum, ter̲kum, kuṇakkum kuṭakkum," for N.S.E.W.

C. To complete what I have stated above, not only the noun "kēṭu" but the verb "keṭu" and its derivatives like "keṭṭuppōyin̲an̲" are all to be traced ultimately to "kīl̲" = down. The letter and sound ழ் (l̲) is basic not only to Tamil (தமிழ்) but to the ancient Dravidian speech and its loss in Kannada in the ninth century is to be deplored as well as the bad habit of many Jaffna Tamilians of pronouncing it exactly as ள் (ḷ).

D. The next question that arises in this connexion is this: is there a relationship of ultimate identity between the two roots

which we have just discussed: "kīḻ"="down, under" and "kiḻ-a"= ownership, whence "kiḻavaṉ" or "kiḻār" or "kiḻamai"? Ownership or dominion on the part of one surely denotes *subjection* on the part of others, whether they be the days of the week, which both the Dravidians and the Indo-Aryans placed *under* the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn in exactly the same order, or whether the *dependent* ones are grown up children and grandchildren, whom the *"kiḻavōṉ"* and *"kiḻatti"* ruled over, even in the maturer years of the former, somewhat like the Roman "paterfamilias" in Seneca's time, or whether the kiḻār's *subjects* were peasants and serfs, who placed themselves under his dominion for their own protection in those troubled days. To state this problem in this way is almost to solve it.

E. Finally, there may be a connexion of the same nature between "kīḻ" = *down* and "kiṇṭu" = to delve *down,* to dig *down.* Hence all these words form *one word-group,* the fifth. It is interesting to find the various ramifications of one word-root.

It is well-known that, as Telugu became a really cultivated language later than Kannaḍa or Tamil-Malayalam, it often slurs over the distinction that these make between the dental and the retroflex consonants. It is for this reason that, as we shall see in the discussion of the next word-group, the sixth, Telugu has both "poddu" (= the sun, time) and the forms appuḍu (= at that time), ippuḍu (= at this time) and eppuḍu (= at which time?) Similarly, instead of Tamil "kīḻ," Teḷugu has "kinda or krinḍa" = under, below, on the ground; "kindi" or krinḍi = downwards. Look up A. Galletti di Cadilhac's Telugu Dictionary, Oxford, 1935, page 69. Now when we compare Tamil "kiṇṭu", pronounced "kiṇḍu" (= to dig), with Telugu "kinḍa, kinḍi (= on the ground, below, downwards), our conviction becomes strengthened that we are dealing with words that ultimately go back to an identical root. The Tamil lexicographer will be vastly assisted by a knowledge of the other Dravidian languages, especially of the cultivated ones. Thus Tamil 'mutucom" seems to have no etymology, except for "mutu" = "old:" but in Telugu "sommu" = money, *ibid,* page 30. Hence Tamil "mutucomu" or "mutucom". Hence *rule 4*: study the other Dravidian languages as far as you can, before embarking on Tamil lexicography.

The 6th Word-root and its group: pōḻ = to pierce.

There is perhaps no word in Tamil that exhibits such a wide sweep of semantic change as the verbal root "pōḻ". It is a far cry from '"piercing" to the sense of "time". Yet the semantic change amounts to exactly that. Let us take the ancient Tamil proverb, which has been embedded into the so-called "Sangham" work, the Paḻamoḻi Nāṉūṟu:—

"அயிலாலே போழ்ப அயில்".

The commentary runs:

இரும்பைக் கூரிய இரும்பினாலேயே பிளப்பர்.

With steel alone do they *pierce* steel. Paḻamoḻi 8d.

It is a statement of the nature of "steel piercing steel" or "diamond cutting diamonds". I have already dealt with the grammatical features of the finite verb, "pōḻpa" = they pierce, which recalls the "moḻipa, eṉpa, kaṟpa" etc. of Tolkāppiyam and the earliest classics. Confer Tamil Culture IX, 2, 173-174. Now I intend to tackle the semantic changes of "pōḻ = to pierce. By the addition of the suffix "-tu", we get "pōḻtu", or its variant from poḻu (= iden): "poḻutu", signifying the "*piercer*" par excellence, in the tropical lands like South India and Ceylon which lie under the rays of a scorching *sun*. The occurrence of "poddu" in Telugu to connote *the sun* shows that the word is not merely Tamil but also Dravidian. Confer Galletti's Telugu Dictionary, page 278.

But Telugu "poddu" signifies not only the *sun* but also the *time* as measured by the sun, and later time in general. So does Tamil "pōḻtu" in "centamiḻ". The reader will recall the first line of the Nālaṭi stanza, cited in the discussion of the 1st word-root and its group: vaḷ/vaṇṭu:—Nālaṭi 284a: uṇṭāya *pōḻtin* = at the *time* of prosperity. From this it is just a small step for "appōḻtu" or *appoḻutu* to denote "then", and "ippoḻutu" or "ippōḻtu" to signify "now". Telugu has "appuḍu" and "ippuḍu" in these two significations respectively. So far the semantic changes. Now note the morphological transformations. For the fast or careless speaker of an earlier age "appōḻtu", "ippōḻtu" and "eppōḻtu" (= when?) were rather difficult to pronounce. Hence the "ḻ" was dropped, resulting in "appōtu, ippōtu, eppōtu". These are the terms employed in the modern Standard Colloquial Tamil. But a further shortening and debasing of the words has now taken place: in the substan-

dard dialect or slang, these words, at least in the Jaffna peninsula, have become "appō" (= French "donc"), ippō, eppō". There are some who maintain that even these forms should be accepted.

Let us pass on from the retroflex *medials, the "iṭaiyiṉam"* ḷ and ḻ, to the alveolar medial, "l". In certain combinations this becomes ṟ (ற்) as in the second line of the first Kuṟaḷ stanza:—

akara mutala eḻuttu ellām
ātipakavaṉ mutaṟṟē ulaku.

Here mutal + tu > mutaṟṟu.

Even the formation of the two Tamil letters, ல் (= l) and ற் (= ṟ), shows this connexion. Likewise for the alveolar nasal ன் (= ṉ). Let us take a few roots ending in "l".

The 7th Word-root and its group: ol = to unite (often with reality)

Even such a simple word like "oṉṟu" (= one thing) is derived from the primary root, "ol" = to be joined, possible, feasible. The phrase "ollum vakaiyāṉ" (= in every possible way, by every means coming to our hands) is found enough in the old commentaries to Tolkāppiyam. The later commentaries explain "ol" as "kūṭu", kaikkūṭu" = to unite, to come to hand, to join with oneself. It is quite clear from this exposition that "ol" is the verbal root, whence* ol + untu > *olntu > oṉṟu was formed. Look up supplementary note 4 below.

The 8th Word-root and its group: kal = to learn etc.

The verbal root "kal" had a variety of significations, ranging from "planning, devising" through "learning" to that highest form of self discipline in women, "virginal chastity"[2] "kaṟpu". But this latter word is not confined to chastity, as some might imagine; for we meet it in the sense of "learning by experience", the more so, as it is contrasted with "ignorance" at NNV. 12 (= the 12th stanza of Nīti Neṟi Viḷakkam):—

இவறன்மை கண்டும் உடையாரை யாரும்
குறையிரந்துங் குற்றேவல் செய்ப. — பெரிதுந்தாம்
முற்பகல் நோலாதார் நோற்றாரைப் பின்செல்லல்
கற்பன்றே! கல்லாமை அன்று.

2. (or chastity in marriage? *Ed.*)

The Sanskrit and Sinhalese words, "kalpa, kalpaka, kalpanā" etc. are thus definitely formed round the Dravidian root "kal". As is usual in Tamil, this root differentiates itself in its nasalized form, "kaṉā, kaṉavu", to denote "device, planning, imagination". The latter is in modern Standard Colloquial Tamil "kaṟpaṉā cakti": the Sinhalese verb "kalpanā karanawa" means "to imagine". I shall show presently that the latter is the older form: kalpanā is more original than kaṟpaṉā or kaṟpaṉai, for l antecedes ṟ here.

In the section of Tamil grammars, entitled "puṇar iyal" and dealing with "sandhi" or the euphonic combination of words, we are told that l and p or k must *necessarily* coalesce into ṟp or ṟk. But the *necessity* of this is open to doubt. Though for more than a thousand years the words I mentioned just now were written as "kaṟpa, kaṟpaka, kaṟpaṉai, kaṟpaṉā cakti", yet when Sanskrit borrowed these words from very early Tamil, the original "l" had remained in the borrowed Sanskrit and presumably in the original Tamil words themselves. Furthermore, this phenomenon is not confined to words taken into *Sanskrit* from Tamil. Megasthenes (c. 305 B.C.), Pliny (23-79 A.D.), the Periplus Maris Erythraei (1st century A.D.) and Ptolemy (2nd century A.D.) mention *Kolkhoi* as the chief town in the interior of the Tamil country with which the contemporary Romans and Phoenicians were then trading Cf. Tamil Culture, Vol. X, 3, pages 10 to 14 and the many references given therein. Historians of India are unanimous that Koṟkai, the old city of the Pāṇḍya kings, is referred to here. To the Greeks and to the contemporary Tamilians the "l" in *Kolkhoi* had not yet been changed into "ṟ".

The 9th Word-root and its group: Kāl. This root is both nominal and verbal.

At the time of this Roman trade with South India, which has been so well described by the Greek geographers afore-mentioned, a line of an Akanāṉūṟu poem, which describes it from the Tamilian angle, ends with the phrase, "kāl-oṭu pōki". The reference is to the change of the monsoon winds, making it possible for the ships to return from the Tamil ports to Egypt. In modern Tamil it would be: kāṟṟōṭu pōy". Note the old Tamil word "kāl" for wind. But "kāl" meant such a variety of things then that soon

formatives and affixes were added, so as to differentiate between the several meanings.

Kāl^{1} = wind. Later, kāl + tu > kaṟṟu = id. Cf. eṟi kāl (wind) mukattu, NNV. 50d.

Kāl^{2} = time. Later, kāl + am > kālam = id. Also kāl + tum > kāṟum = the time. Cf. itukāṟum = up to this time.

Kāl^{3} = leg. No suffix was needed for this.

Kāl^{4} = ¼th. The leg is one fourth of the human body, when we reckon it up to the knee-joint, முழங்கால்.

Kāl^{5} = stream, from kālu = to flow. Later kālum yāṟu > kāṉyāṟu. At Kṟt. 256 : 2 we find the phrase பிணிகால் மென் கொம்பு. Here "kāl" is a verb.

Kāl^{6} = channel, conduit. Later, vāykkāl = id. This term will not fit the English Channel.

Kāl^{7} = canal, like the Suez Canal. Later, kālvāy = id.

What is common to all these meanings, except the fourth, is the idea of flowing steadily, motion, or the origin of movement, like the leg of man or beast.

It is for this reason that I take "kālam" as basically a Dravidian word. In 1952 I discussed this word with Professor Thomas Burrow of Oxford. He inclined to the view that Tamil had borrowed it from Sanskrit, as the word is already found in the Rig Veda, as at X, 42, 9. But in view of these facts, namely

(1) that according to this same Professor, there are 27 words, in the Rig Veda, of Tamil or Dravidian origin,

(2) that "kālam" has no etymology in Sanskrit, whereas it has one in Tamil as I have just shown,

(3) that in the earliest texts the original form "kāl", is more common than the later form "kālam", we must conclude that this is the 28th word, in the Rig Veda, of Dravidian origin. More may be *found by* diligent scrutiny.

Now, a parting word as regards the fourth meaning. To any impartial observer, it is quite clear that the fourth meaning logically flows from the third. This is one more illustration of my rule: from the physical (here the leg) to the metaphysical (here an arithmetical fractional number). I am surprised therefore at the persistent efforts of modern Tamilian grammarians to throw dust into our eyes and to distort and warp the young Tamilian minds by teaching them that the semantic flow is in the *reverse* direction.[3]

The 10th Word-root and its group: Cāl = to be abundant.

This verb and its derivatives, like cāla, cālpu, cāṉṟa, cāṉṟōṉ, have been exhaustively dealt with by me, on pages 86 to 92, of "Tamil Culture", Vol. X, No. 4. In the previous number of the same Journal, Dr. X. S. Thani Nayagam has compared the Tamil "cāṉṟōṉ", whom I have there described, with the Wise Man of other cultures, like those of Rome or Greece, or the Mahāpuruṣa of the Sanskritic or Ārya tradition. Both articles are worth re-reading. Note that this root too rests on "l".

The 11th Word-root and its group: nil, another root that ends in the alveolar "l".

A word like "niṟuvu" = to establish postulates a basic or primary root like "nil". This is valid likewise in the Indo-European languages too. Thus the English words like "station, stabilize, establish", all postulate the Latin root "stāre" = to "stand", German "stehen", Sanskrit "sths" whence 'sthala", etc. This is another instance as far as Tamil *"nil"* is concerned of my second rule: *search for the "iṭaiyiṉam"*, especially the three "ls" namely l, ḷ and ḻ, as the last letter of monosyllabic roots. The ones I am giving and discussing here are of that nature. These primary roots are basic to a host of words in Tamil and in other Dravidian tongues.

3. In the section on one of the sixteen kinds of "āku peyar", V. Narasimhaiyar's Grammar, 1945, pages 92-3. Cf. The 7th āku peyar, eṇ: "kāl carukkiṉatu":

இதில் கால் என்னும் எண்ணளவுப் பெயர் அவ்வளவைக் கொண்ட
உறுப்புக்கு ஆயிற்று

The 12th Word-root and its group: pāl = to share and take the good part.

"Pāl" is another ancient Tamil verb, like "Cāl". It is not so commonly used as the latter, except as '"pāṟṟu" in the poetical Tamil, and as "pālatu" in the prose passages, as a finite verb. Thus "collal pāṟṟu" would mean "it is worth saying, it must be said, it is true". The basic idea is that of *sharing* or dividing and of *taking* for one's self *the good part.* Hence arose the abstract noun of quality, "pāṉmai". Most often combined with maṉam (= mind) in the phrase "maṉappāṉmai", it comes to mean the intellectual aspect of one's *character,* the basic view of life and activity as evinced by any one. Thus Buddha's "maṉappānmai" was that one should always endeavour to crush out desire (*taṇhā*) as the cause of pain. Added ingredients in the same were his immense compassion for the suffering masses, his insistence on each one working out one's own salvation by one's own efforts and his antagonism to "caste". Thus we see that Buddha *sheared,* as one shears the wool off sheep, and *shared* the philosophy of his time and *took* for himself what he, considered *the better part.* This is where "pāl" differs from "paku", which signifies a simple division. From "paku" comes the word "pakavāṉ", the one who shares out the food at the head of the domestic table, the lord or master. Hence the Sanskritic "bhagavat", nominative "bhagavān".

We return to "maṉappāṉmai", which is rendered as "uṭkiṭai", i.e. the interior state. Further, from the words "ciṟupālum" (= a few) and "perumpālum" (= many, mainly), by the addition of the formative "-ai", which I have mentioned before, are fashioned the abstract nouns:—

cirupāṉmai = minority and
perumpāṉmai = the majority.

At Tol. Col. Vēṟṟumai Iyal, 13, we find "pāla" as a finite verb in the neuter plural: அன்ன பிறவும் அதன்பால என்மனூர், Tol. Col. 74th. Its use in the neuter singular is more frequent, as, for instance, in this Paḻamoḻi stanza:—

கல்லாதும் கேளாதும் கற்ருர் அவைநடுவண்
சொல் ஆடு வாரை அஞ்சற் பாற்று. Pal. 20 a.b.

நூல்களைக் கல்லாதும் கற்ருரிடம் கேளாதும் அறிஞர்களது அவையிடை
சிலசொற் சொல்லுதலுடையாரையும் அஞ்சுந்தகுதியை உடையது,
20 a.b. Comm.

The phrase, "col āṭu" here is rather peculiar, because it is ancient, as far as Tamil is concerned. In her sister tongue, Telugu, it is quite common to this day: — abaddham āḍuṭa = to tell a lie. vrēl-āḍuṭa = to dangle, hang (intransitive). māṭl — āḍuṭa = to use words, to talk. According to Galletti, op. cit. page 29, "āḍuṭa" verbalizes the noun. Its use is very common: to do, to talk, or almost anything else according to the context. In modern Tamil, however, the usage survives practically in such phrases only as viḷaiyāṭu = to play, kūtt-āṭu = to dance and nīr-āṭu = to bathe, just as in former times, as nāliṭi 332 a-b shows, "kaṭalāṭu" meant "to bathe": —

பெருங்கடல் ஆடிய சென்றார், "ஒருங்குடன்
ஓசை அவிந்தபின் ஆடுதும்".

From the verb "pāl" is fashioned the noun '"pālan̲" = the one entitled to the share that is spoken of, as at Pal̲amol̲i 19 a-b (i.e. the first two lines): —

துன்னி இருவர் தொடங்கிய மாற்றத்தில் (Cf. māṭlu in Tel.)
பின்னை உரைக்கப் படற்பாலான். ....

Such nouns are called "vin̲aiyāl aṇaiyum peyar".

If the share is evil, this is explicitly stated, as at Pal̲amol̲i 77a

தீப்பால் வினையினைத் தீரவும் அஞ்சாராய் ....

This "pāl" is apparently different from pāl^2 = milk, unless it be that the milk of cows was *shared* between the calves and the domestic household. But the latter "pāl"^{2} is the root definitely of pālan̲ = *milk*-drinking infant, whence Sanskrit borrowed its bāla = a child.

The 13*th Word-root and its group*: pal = several, many, whence pallār = several people, a multitude, as at Pal̲amol̲i 75a, which I have already cited in this Journal, Vol. X, 4, page 95, in connexion with Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla: —

பல்லார் அவைநடுவன் பாற்பட்ட சான்றவர்
சொல்லார் ஒருவரையும் உள்ளூன்ற.

Pal̲amol̲i 75 a-b. Note "p̲āl" and "cān̲ravar", discussed above, occurring in the same line. To reinforce the sense of the multitude involved, the word "p̲al" is repeated and is followed by the particle of relationship "-a", e.g. "par̲pala".

"Kōṭi" originally meant a pyramidal heap, but came to mean a crore, i.e. ten millions. "Ilakkam", sanskritized into "lakṣa", meant originally A SHINING MARK, a superb target: eventually it came to mean 100,000. For the sense of "shining mark", confer the line அல் ஆரும் எண்ணிலா வான்மீன் இலகு இடினும் = although the stars *shine*.

A sanskritic ślōka praises the moon and disparages the stars thus:—"īkaś candras tamō hanti na tu tārā gaṇō'pi ca." This is fine; but it is rendered still more meaningfully and beautifully in Tamil:— *அல்லாரும் எண்ணிலா வான்மீன் இலகிடினும் வானகத்தோர் வெண்திலா ஆமோ? விளம்பு."* = though the countless stars filling the night shine. "Nūṟu", originally a cluster of shattered pieces, came to mean finally the number 'hundred". Similarly, "pal" (= many) came to mean "ten". Hence the forms "paṉṉiraṇṭu" = twelve, paḥtu > pattu; but paḥtu + iṉ > patiṉ. In fact, the attenuated l (or ḷ) is the basic cause or origin of the āytam (ஃ) in Tamil. These are all instances of rule 1: from the concrete to the abstract. That "pal" becomes paḥ (பஃ) before "t" is shown by such words as "paḥṟēṟ", from "pal tēr" = many chariots, at PN. 4 *"பஃறேர் இளஞ் சேட் சென்னி"*.

(To be continued)

News and Notes

TAMIL STUDIES

With the inauguration of the university in a few months and the decision of the Madras Government to set up a department of south-east Asian studies, as announced by Mr. Bhaktavatsalam at Kuala Lumpur on Saturday, Madurai is on the way to regaining its intellectual primacy. One of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, Madurai is the place where the proposed studies will be most appropriate. By far the greatest part of those studies relates to the influence of south Indian religion, philosophy and art in south-east Asia, and it was Madurai that was the nerve centre for many centuries of a civilisation that scattered its riches carelessly, as it were.

The first international conference on Tamil studies, now being held at Kuala Lumpur, is an important event in the development of that ancient language. The conference is going about the task of developing Tamil in the right way. It lays stress on research. That research should deal not only with the fascinating riches of the language's past but also with means of bringing it uptodate. A classical tongue like Tamil cannot afford to live on its past. It faces new responsibilities, and it should be equipped to deal with them. The chauvinists who would make it bear the burden before it really can are only harming it.

The Education Minister set the high tone of the conference when he said that Malaysia owed its culture mainly to South India, and that the present generation should emulate the achievements of their ancestors. In the eleventh century Tamil mariners thought little of crossing the Bay of Bengal in the rudimentary state of navigation in those days to found an empire on the other side of the Bay. Tamil influence is still strong in Malaysia and Indo-China, and general Indian influence in Indonesia. That was not achieved by staying at home. The Kuala Lumpur conference

may well provide the mental stimulus needed for new efforts at enterprise, bravery and skill.

—*The Indian Express,* 19-4-66.

WORLD CONFERENCE ON TAMIL

Sanskritic Infusion

But the Tamil flag which fluttered so peacefully and proudly so far afield sustained itself on a Sanskritic infusion into Tamil which is one of the glories of history, and a source of embarrassment to true-blue Tamils to-day. It was not the Aryans who were responsible for that cultural proliferation, but the Tamils themselves who still know a good thing when they find it and put it to the best use. The influence of Sanskrit on Tamil is comparable to the shaping of modern English under the impact of Latin; and it is no accident that the people who took to Sanskrit in the past find their descendants to-day taking to English with equal, if not, heightened fervour. For the element in English which holds us in thrall is not Anglo-Saxon but Latin and Greek derivative which have a family kinship to Sanskrit. We still laud the glories of Tamil in a minor key, but not until it enjoys political primacy and prestige in its own habitat, can we hope for its recognition as a world language to justify a world conference on it.

Not in Tamil

One of the Tamil delegates who attended the conference marred the proceedings somewhat by complaining that papers were not read in Tamil. While I sympathise with him, I think his objection is misconceived. It would be valid if such a piece of foppery were to be indulged in by Tamils speaking in Tamilnad to Tamils: for among ourselves no extraneous considerations operate or should be allowed in the elucidation and enjoyment of literature, history, science or philosophy. But in an international assembly what happens is a little more complicated. Lovers of Tamil abroad have developed it as ancillary to their love of their own mother tongue; and they cannot express their reactions to the mastery of a foreign tongue except in their own media. An

Englishman growing lyrical over Tiruvalluvar or Manickavachagar can only depend upon his mother tongue for the achievement, and so with French, German, Dutch and Czech writers. They are in fact contributing materially to the discovery of the word-character of Tamil—its language, literature and culture, for to the extent that they give them a local colour in their own tongues, they promote an osmosis which benefits the borrower and lender alike.

—*The Weekly Mail,* Madras, 8th May 1966.

KUALA LUMPUR CONFERENCE

The close cultural ties between India and countries of South-East Asia are a result of contacts over the centuries in such fields as religion and language—Hinduism, Buddhism, Sanskrit and Tamil, for instance. The International Conference on Tamil Studies now meeting in Kuala Lumpur is eloquent testimony to this process. Tamil has been assured its due place in Malaysia, in which people of Tamil stock form about a tenth of the population and have always been in the vanguard of all movements which make for national integration and the maintenance of freedom. That there is widespread interest in Tamil studies is evident from the fact that delegates to the conference have come from the USSR, the U.S., the U.K., Japan, Western and East European countries, in addition to South-East Asia. The ancient Tamils were a maritime people and were eager cultural ambassadors, giving and receiving. Mr. M. Bhaktavatsalam, who is heading a large delegation from Madras State, has done well to emphasise these ancient bonds.

We, in India, have also become more and more interested in the study of the manner in which this cultural fertilisation has taken different forms in South-East Asian countries. A department of South-East Asian Studies in Madurai University, as hinted at by Mr. Bhaktavatsalam, would seem to be an essential requirement and co-operation from countries like Malaysia should be easily available in this connection. Specific steps in translating this

proposal into a reality should be taken before the next meeting of the conference which has been invited by Mr. Bhaktavatsalam to hold that session in Madras.

The Hindu, Tuesday, April 19, 1966

KUALA LUMPUR

The International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies that met in the University of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur last April was a unique gathering. It was 'international' because delegates from about 20 countries (including India, Malaysia, Ceylon, Singapore, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, Mauritius, UK, France, Holland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA) participated in the Conference-Seminar; and out of 250 'registrants' about 200 actually attended it. A conference that brought to the same forum scholars like Prof. Filliozat of the College de France (he was the President), Prof. Kuiper of Leiden University, the Rev. Frykholm of Uppsala, Prof. Carl Keller of Lausanne, Prof. Emeneau of California, Dr. John Marr of the London School of Oriental and African Studies, and Dr. Asher of Edinburgh University,—not to mention some of the great Tamil scholars and Dravidologists of India, Ceylon and Malaysia,—could certainly claim an 'international' status. But in another—and perhaps more important—sense also it was an international conference, for it gave formal recognition to the fact that Tamil studies have now a global vogue.

Tamil scholars from India, Ceylon and Malaysia met to pool their knowledge together, exchange ideas, and share enthusiasms; and also to meet, and learn from, the great savants of other countries who have pursued Tamil or Dravidian studies with single-minded diligence and devotion. On their part, these savants came to meet eminent Tamil-speaking Tamil scholars like Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaran, Prof. M. Varadarajan and Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan, and to hear chaste Tamil spoken by men born to its immense heritage like K. V. Jaganathan, Sa Ganesan and Sivagnana Gramani. Among the delegates there were not only poets, professors, novelists, essayists, translators and journalists, but also members of the Indian and Ceylon administrative and judicial services.

Yet as one recapitulated at leisure the proceedings of the Conference-Seminar during the return flight from Kuala Lumpur to Calcutta—with a day's break at Bangkok—one saw the outlines of the wood behind the distracting multitudinous trees. The sessions, one felt, could be mentally reassorted so as to present in clearer terms the whole aim and total achievement of the Conference-Seminar:

(1) *History of the Tamils in the wider perspective of South and South-East Asia.*—There were three sessions, one covering early times, the second the period after 1500 A.D., and the third was devoted to the problems of trade and external relations in the region. Indian—and Tamil—influence in the entire South-East Asian region has been a historic, and is still a continuing, phenomenon, with mutually beneficial results.

(2) *Continuity and change in Tamil society.*—This was covered in three more sessions, devoted to the Sangam period, the Chera-Chola-Pandyan period, and the modern respectively.

(3) *Dravidian and Tamil linguistics.*—There were three sessions again, devoted respectively to Dravidian and Comparative linguistics, Diachronic linguistics, and Synchronic linguistics. In another session a paper was presented on early Brahmi inscriptions in Tamil.

(4) *The popular culture of the Tamils.*—Iconography, art, literature, music and drama, all figured in the conference papers and discussions. Two whole sessions were allotted, and there was a Veena demonstration by S. Ramanathan (Karnatak College of Music) and an illustrative Bharata Natyam recital by Nirmala Ramachandran.

(5) *Tamil literature, ancient and modern.*—Religious and secular poetry, Tamil poetics, and criticism in Tamil, all came within the scope of the discussions. Several papers were presented, and the discussions were lively and stimulating. Of the moderns, Subramania Bharati was the subject of four papers.

(6) *The range of Tamil studies.*—New directions in Tamil scholarship and research; the problem of translation, from and into Tamil; and the problem of teaching Tamil.

(7) *Problems of organization and communication.*—The IATR, and its regional Branches; future biennial Conference-Seminars, and where they should be held and how they should be organized; publication of a Bibliography of Tamil Research in Progress.

The Conference-Seminar had perhaps the character more of a conference than of a seminar; and sometimes it had the look of a Congress rather than a Conference. There were hard-headed sophisticated discussions, and there were smiles betokening infectious friendliness.

—*Swarajya,* July 9, 1966.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE-SEMINAR OF TAMIL STUDIES

A Brief Report

The first International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies, sponsored by the International Association of Tamil Research, the National Education (Indian Schools) Development Council, Malaya, and the University of Malaya, was held at the Third Residential College premises, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, between 16th April and 23rd April 1966.

Of the total number 240 delegates and 50 observers who had registered, 132 delegates and 40 observers attended the Conference-Seminar. Among those who participated as delegates, there were one from Burma, thirty-one from Ceylon, one from Denmark, five from France, two from West Germany, one from Holland, one from Hong Kong, forty-two from India, two from Japan, fourteen from Malaysia, four from Mauritius, one from the Philippines, one from Portugal, six from Singapore, one from South Korea, one from Sweden, one from Switzerland, one from Thailand, five from United Kingdom, eight from the United States of America and three from South Vietnam.

The Conference-Seminar was declared open by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Malaysia, Yang Teramat Mulia Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-haj, at 10.30 a.m. on Saturday 16th April 1966

in the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman, Ampang Road, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sessions: The proceedings of the Conference extended over five full days between Monday 18th April and Friday 22nd April 1966. A total number of twelve Plenary Sessions and six Group Sessions were held during this period, and on Saturday, 23rd April 1966, the Final 'Open' Session was held.

The Plenary Sessions were conducted on the following subjects: (a) History and Culture in Southeast Asia with particular reference to Tamil Cultural Contacts, (b) Tamil Literary Criticism, (c) Tamil Society in the Cankam period, (d) Westerners and Tamil Studies, (e) Literature and Society, (f) Modern Tamil Literature, (g) Southeast Asia after 1500 (h) Music and Dance, (i) Art and Antiquity, (j) Dravidian Comparative Linguistics, and (k) Tamil Society in the modern period. One Plenary session was devoted to the discussion of papers presented in Tamil.

The subjects of the Group Sessions were: The Tamil Society of the period of the Three Empires, Trade and External Relations, Teaching of Tamil, Diachronic Tamil Linguistics, Synchronic Tamil Linguistics, and Translation.

A total number of 150 research papers were presented at the Conference sessions; delegates who were able to present their papers in person were each given ten minutes to present their findings in a summary form, followed by discussion. There were a Chairman and a Discussion Leader for each session.

The proceedings of the Conference-Seminar were adequately documented. Copies of Conference papers, most of them written in English and a few in Tamil, were made available to the participants before each session. The entire proceedings were recorded on tapes.

The business of the Conference sessions were conducted principally in English. Tamil was also used by a number of Delgates.

The Proceedings will be published in 1967.

Ceremonial Opening

The Ceremonial Opening of the Conference was held at 10.30 a.m. on Saturday 16th April 1966. All delegates and Obser-

vers and about 600 other local invited guests including Government Ministers, members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of organisations, foundations, institutions of higher learning, donors and other dignitaries were present in the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman which was specially decorated with the flags of countries from which delegates and observers had come. Speeches of welcome were made by the Chairman of the Conference Organising Committee, Tan Sri V. T. Sambanthan, Minister of Works, Posts and Telecommunications, Malayasia, by Prof. J. Filliozat, President of the International Association of Tamil Research, and Prof. R. L. Huang, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, followed by the Ceremonial Opening Address by Yang Teramat Mulia Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-haj, Prime Minister of Malaysia. The Hon'ble Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nad, and also Leader of the Delegation from India addressed the gathering on behalf of delegates. Mr. V. Selvanayagam, General Secretary of the Conference Organising Committee gave the address of Vote of thanks in which he acknowledged on behalf of the Organisers all the help and assistance rendered by various organisations, foundations, and individuals for the successful holding of the Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Exhibition

An Exhibition relating to South East Asia was organised in conjunction with the Conference. It was held in two sections. The main exhibition consisting of sculptures and other archaeological finds was declared open by the Hon'ble Enche Mohamed Khir Johari, Minister for Education, Malaysia at the premises of the national Museum, Kuala Lumpur, at 4.00 p.m. on 16th April 1966. Another section of the exhibition consisting of publications, rare books, and pictures relating to Tamil Studies, was officially opened by the Hon'ble Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nad.

A special Plenary session was held at 11.30 a.m. on Tuesday 19th April 1966 at which the Hon'ble Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussain, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence and Rural Development, Malaysia, addressed the delegates on Malaysia's Rural Development Projects.

Social and Cultural Functions

Several social functions were held at which delegates were entertained. These included the Prime Minister's Reception held in the Parliament House at 5.00 p.m. on 16th April, the Vice-Chancellor's Buffet Party at 8.00 p.m. at the University Arts Concourse on 16th April, the Reception of H.E. the High Commissioner for India at 4, Madge Drive, Kuala Lumpur on Sunday 17th April, the Cultural Night of dances and music held at 8.00 p.m. at the Balai Budaya, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur on 18th April, the Friends Night on 19th April when local residents entertained delegates to Dinner in their homes, and the Embassies Night on 21st April when the local embassies were hosts to delegates of their countries and other guests, and finally the Farewell Dinner held by the Conference Organising Committee at the Parliament House at 8.00 p.m. on Saturday 23rd April.

A special performance of the (Malayan) Kelantan Wayang Kulit (leather puppet show) was held at the Conference premises at 8.30 p.m. on Friday 22nd April.

Public Session

For the benefit of those members of the public who could not be present at the formal sessions of the Conference, three public lectures one in English and two in Tamil, were held in the Balai Budaya of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, and in the Chin Woo Stadium on 24th and 25th April. Several scholars addressed these public meetings which were well attended.

Post-Conference Lecture tours

After the week of formal conference activities were over, two lecture tours were arranged, one to the north of Malaysia, and the other to the south including Singapore. A number of delegates participated in these tours and addressed public meetings during the following two weeks.

The motto of the Conference-Seminar was 'Yātum ūre, yāvarum kēḷir' ('Every town is my town, everyone is my kinsman').

Publications

A number of new publications were released on the occasion of the Conference-Seminar including the following:

Xavier S. Thani Nayagam. *A Reference Guide to Tamil Studies*, Books. (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press), 1966.

X. S. Thani Nayagam and Edgar C. Knowlton (Jr., *Antao De Proenca*: Tamil -Portuguese Dictionary The Hague: Brill), 1966.

Andronov, M. *Materials for a Bibliography of Dravidian Linguistics* (Kuala Lumpur: I.A.T.R.), 1966.

William Willets. *An Illustrated, Annotated Annual Bibliography of Mahabalipuram on the Coromandel Coast of India from* 1582-1962 (Kuala Lumpur: I.A.T.R.), 1966.

Ilakkiya-k-kolkai. A Tamil translation of Theory of Literature by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. (Translated by Gloria Sundaramati under the supervision of Prof. V. I. Subramoniam). Madras: I.A.T.R. 1966.

S. Singaravelu. *Social Life of the Tamils, the Classical Period.* (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Indian Studies, University of Malaya), 1966.

Rama Subbiah. *A Lexical Study of Tamil Dialects in Lower Perak.* (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Indian Studies, University of Malaya), 1966.

Morais, Victor (ed.). *I.A.T.R. Who's Who.* (Kuala Lumpur: I.A.T.R.), 1966.

S. Arasaratnam. *Indian Festivals in Malaya.* (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Indian Studies, University of Malaya), 1966).

Forthcoming publication

Proceedings of the International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies, 1966.

SEMINAR ON

GRAMMATICAL THEORIES IN TAMIL

A Report

Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaran, former Director of the Advanced Centre in Linguistics, Annamalai University, conceived the idea

of holding seminars on grammatical theories in Dravidian languages and conducted one on Malayalam at Trivandrum in June, 1965, another on Telugu at Hyderabad in September 1965 and the third on Kannada at Mysore in October, 1965. The fourth one in this series was on Tamil and organised with the help of the grant from U.G.C. by Mr. M. Shanmugam Pillai, Head of the Department of Linguistics, at Annamalainagar on 30th, 31st July and 1st August.

The seminar on Tamil Grammatical theories was inaugurated by Dr. S. P. Adinarayan, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University. He pointed out in his address the importance of linguistics in simplifying grammar and in improving teaching of language. Tamil scholars and linguists from U.S.A., Malaysia, Ceylon and all over India participated in this three-day seminar. Twenty research papers were read by these scholars in six sessions starting from Tolkappiyam down to the Tamil grammar by Westerners. Some of the subjects are Tolkappiyar's treatment of syntax, morphology, morphophonemics and phonology, contributions of the commentators, Naccinarkkiniyar, Mayilainatar and Sivagnanamunivar to the theory of Tamil Grammar, a modern evaluation of Viracoliyam, Neminatam, Nannul and Ilakkanavilakkan and studies of Tamil semantics, loan-words and grammatical terms. Over hundred observers attended each section.

As Dr. M. Varadarajan, Professor of Tamil, University of Madras said presiding over one of the sessions, the study of our old grammar with a background of modern linguistics will throw much light on them, reveal their immense understanding of the language and its principles and also it will contribute to improve upon the modern linguistics theories themselves. The need to edit our grammars with notes and interpretations from the point of view of modern linguistics was also felt.

S. V. SHANMUGAM,

E. ANNAMALAI,

Secretaries.

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

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